

THOUGHTS AT FOURSORE

Thomas Cooper

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Yours truly,
Thomas Cooper.

THOUGHTS AT FOURSCORE,

AND EARLIER.

A Medley.

BY

THOMAS COOPER,

AUTHOR OF

'THE PURGATORY OF SUICIDES,' 'THE PARADISE OF MARTYRS,' 'THE BRIDGE OF
HISTORY OVER THE GULF OF TIME,' 'PLAIN PULPIT TALK,' ETC., ETC.

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C81t

TO
HENRY WARDLE, ESQ., J.P.,

OF HIGHFIELD,

BURTON-ON-TRENT,

THIS VOLUME IS MOST RESPECTFULLY

AND GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

A “MEDLEY,” I call my book, and readers will say I have done right in giving it such a name : whether I have done right in publishing it, is another question. I never, before, ventured to print anything that presumed to treat on such a variety of subjects.

The first seven papers are composed, chiefly, of sketches written for a small monthly periodical conducted by my valued friend, Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown. He kindly gives me leave to make use of them ; and I have done so—with some alterations.

The Second Series of Letters to Young Working Men, I am allowed to republish by my old and kind friend, Joseph Cowen, M.P.,—to whom the *Northern Tribune* belonged.

2, PORTLAND PLACE,
ST. MARY'S STREET, LINCOLN,
20th March, 1885.

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I.

THE CHANGES OF LIFE.

A MAN who lives forty years sees many changes in life, if he looks observantly about him ; but the man sees a great deal more who lives twice as long, and thus reaches "the days whose strength is but labour and sorrow." I never imagined that I should live till the Year of Grace, 1885 ; but here I am, at fourscore ; and it is but natural that I should think about the changes I have witnessed, or experienced, in this dear Old England, during my life-time.

England itself is not changed, that I can tell. It is still the land 'where the sun gilds the weather-cocks some thrice a-year,' as poor Byron sung. We have fair weather and foul, now, as we had when I was young. Yet, I do not remember, in my early time, the occurrence of so many summers of 'rain and ruin,' like the many summers immediately preceding our last summer. 'Twenty thousand acres of land rendered uncultivable in the Isle of Ely alone.' So I was told, in the old city of Ely itself, by one of its most intelligent inhabitants. Our last

summer, however, was so remarkably fine, that I could not help saying to myself—‘The dear old land is not changed after all : though sunshine often leaves us, it is sure to return.’

Not the dear old land, but its people, and the changes in their condition, socially and otherwise, I am thinking about, chiefly. I am also thinking about the changes in myself : the changes of my inner man, during these fourscore years. That man would be the author of a grand philosophical treatise who could give us a true account and interpretation of the causes of change in men’s convictions and opinions. What remarkable changes some of the most eminent men of this century have undergone ! Nay, what changes they are undergoing and manifesting, even at this day. And yet, it may be that their changes would be seen to be less strange than the crowd judge them to be, if their life-course were thoroughly studied : belike, it would be clearly seen that ‘the child was father to the man’ : that they were the same men, in reality, all along.

But I am thinking more about social changes than any other : the changes in the condition of the People of England—and more especially those called ‘the Working-classes’—during this nineteenth century. The scattered thoughts I contributed to my friend’s little periodical—which I have mentioned in the Preface—are so similar to the thoughts which are running through my mind, now, that I judge

it better to repeat them—with some slight alteration.

I was but a child when the first decade of the nineteenth century was spent. Yet my remembrance of what I saw around me, and of the conversations of upgrown and elderly persons, about the lot of the poor, and their experiences, are very clear. One proud assertion may be made without fear of contradiction : that, at the beginning of the present century, although England was in the very heart of her great death-struggle with France, she was striding on towards an increase of wealth. The bosoms of men throbbed everywhere with earnestness in carrying on great enterprizes of industry. That stubborn energy which impelled the men of the West Riding to lay down miles of rough paving, as bridle-roads, over the wild moors, for carriage of their woollen cloths to distant markets, on heavily-laden pack-horses, had resulted in the amassing of riches by the manufacturers and dyers of Leeds, and smaller Yorkshire towns.

And, soon, the genius of Brindley, by the formation and extension of canals, opened the way to wealth for almost every kind of industry and manufacture in the kingdom. Nor could all the arrogant power of Napoleon—all his attempts to close the ports of Europe against us, by the famous "Continental blockade," check the onward march of our trade. His own necessities often thwarted him.

Just at the very juncture when our bold sailors had succeeded in smuggling forty thousand pairs of boots and shoes into Holland, and the eager Dutch merchants had bought them, and his spies had informed him of it, one of his armies was barefoot ; and, not knowing what else to do in his strait, the imperial despot felt himself compelled to give secret orders to one of his marshals to buy the smuggled goods !

In spite of that huge, prolonged war, which hung the millstone of *eight hundred millions* of national debt round the sturdy neck of John Bull—John grew rich. The war itself was the fertile source of fortunes to contractors for ropes and sails and hammocks and anchors and cannon and all other supplies for our fleet ; and for clothing and all the panoply of war for our army. And thus, employment of one kind or other, was so plentiful, in all the populous parts of the country, that, if a regular workman at one particular trade was thrown out of work for a few weeks, he could readily find employment of some kind, whereby to earn bread for himself and family. Wages were good and employment constant all over the agricultural districts—for it was the great time of prosperity for farmers : they and their landlords often grew wanton while the war prevented our obtaining foreign corn, and they could obtain almost any price they willed for their wheat. And wages were good in almost every branch and kind

of work, in the beginning of the present century : except where labourers by hand had begun to experience that cruel struggle against the more cheaply and rapidly productive power of machinery.

And, because wages were good, working men found no difficulty in turning their hands to other employment, when temporarily thrown out of their regular labour. They could get good food, although corn was dear, and were strong and vigorous, and did not complain, if they had to leave their workshops for out-of-door labour, and try their skill with spade or pickaxe, for a few weeks. Nay, an exchange of labour was looked for as a treat, by all handicrafts in the small towns scattered over the great agricultural districts. As regularly as summer and autumn returned, shoemakers, tailors, saddlers, joiners and carpenters, wheel-wrights, bricklayers and stone-masons, blacksmiths—all who could possibly leave their shops—hastened to the fields to help their customers, the farmers of the neighbourhood, in the gathering in of their hay and corn. And one often heard a shoemaker or tailor, when he was off the stall or the shop-board, and had grown pot-valiant, boast that he could mow as much grass in one long summer's day, or reap and bind as many sheaves of wheat, as any husbandman in the field !

There was want—pinching want—among the feeble-bodied poor, and among the aged, often, as

there is now. But many of the prosperous merchants and gentry took a pride in being kindly to the poor; and the grateful respect in which such benefactors of the needy were held was unlike any grudging observance of thanks that we ever witness now-a-days. The old poor law of Elizabeth—which her great minister, the large-souled and large-hearted Cecil, devised to prevent the poor from perishing—for they *were* perishing, by hundreds, when the monasteries were dissolved, and no more “dole” could be dealt out to them at the doors there,—the old poor law of Elizabeth was in force; and, when I was a child, I often heard the aged poor express thankfulness for the real comfort they experienced in the workhouse. The great evils which were developed by that old law had scarcely any existence then: they grew out of the root-evils of bad *new* laws, as well as bad manners, in the after-times.

The manners and morals of the working classes—I affirm it on my conscience, and in the teeth of all the boast of our advanced civilization,—were better, in England, in the early part of this century, than they are now. The hearty regard of man towards man was greater: there was greater frankness and openness of dealing, one with another: far less selfishness and less forgetfulness that all men are brothers: a more spontaneous readiness to help one another in difficulty: a more complete and entire

forgiveness of one another, if they happened to quarrel—as they often did—in their drink. A child of the poor, and living among them always, my impressible nature received the stamp of all that was said and done around me, so unerringly that I am sure I am not mistaken. “They were ruder in manners,” some critic will suggest. But he that says so, like many other critics, has not read the book. How many working men cultivate manners now-a-days? Ask them, and you will receive a smile of derision for your answer. I must confess I would much rather witness the shy and simple courtesies of the poor in the old times, than the impudence that often takes the name of independence, among them, now.

“But they indulged in brutal sports, sir.” Ay, the bull-running at Stamford, occurred once a year; and, now and then, a wandering foreigner was coaxed to let his bear be baited by bull-dogs; and there was cock-fighting, here and there; and badger-baiting—but that was seldom; while Staffordshire and Lancashire bred savage bull-dogs and set them to fight. But let not the poor of old times be falsely charged with *all* the brutality of the old sports. Let it be remembered that not only the middle classes of the past, but the gentry and squirearchy and many of the privileged classes—not excepting even the clergy—were undisguised patrons and encouragers of these brutal sports. So

that the working classes of old were *no worse than their betters*.

The commoner sports of labourers and handicrafts, seventy years ago, were of a less boisterous description. They sought merriment chiefly. At feasts and fairs, at weddings and "house-warmings," at christenings, and, on every occasion when they could compass it, the young sought the dance. Nay, I have some memories of the aged "footing it featly," much to the admiration and mirth of lookers-on. Maypoles were yet in existence. But five miles from the little Lincolnshire town where I passed my boyhood and youth, the maypole was lowered and readorned with garlands every May-day; and the festival was kept up till the time of my manhood. And dancing on the green, where the maypole had stood in the memories of their grandfathers and grandmothers, was still practised by the lads and lasses in hundreds of villages. The fiddler—often a blind one—was in almost universal request at that time of day. You might have heard the sound of the fiddle—unless you stopped your ears with your fingers to escape a sensation of horror at the murder of music—every night, in the ale-houses of almost every town in the kingdom. The singing of ballads, recording our sea fights, or the loves of sailors and swains, was also a nightly practice in public-houses in those times of war and public excitement. You heard, now and then, of a

prize-fight, but it was a deed of the professionals, and under the patronage of aristocracy. Wrestling was the great delight among strong husbandmen, and the talk about their prowess often lasted for weeks.

The sight of a little lad running in the snow without his shoes, for sport, has suddenly sent me back to the time when I was a shoeless little lad, and the street afforded me great plenty of companions in the same condition. Shoeless children, ragged children, hatless children: how numerous they were in the streets of our towns, large and small, in the early part of the present century! Except in such very severe periods of poverty as that experienced by some of our towns in the North of England during the winter which has just passed, we scarcely ever see a shoeless child, in the street, now-a-days. Many causes have contributed to this change.

There was a worse sight than that of shoeless children, in the times that I am thinking of. What were called 'pock-marked' children, I mean faces pitted with the small-pox, were so numerous, both of upgrown persons and children—ay, both of 'gentle and simple'—that, I am sure, they were more numerous seventy years ago, than any other faces seen in the street. The drains were all open in the streets, and the cess-pools were all open in the alleys and yards. Who can wonder at the spread of

disease, in those years? Leaving these unpleasant memories, I return to my thinking about the habits and customs of the people.

“And what were the habits of the working classes,” asks some one, “as regards thrift and economy?” I am sure they were far superior to the habits of the working classes now. And I feel sure that they had derived their habits from their forefathers—for they lacked good instructors in the times I am thinking of. Some who have been taught to regard Will Cobbett as an exemplar of all the virtues will be startled when I tell them that *his* teaching of the poor was often pernicious. Over and over again he insisted that it was not at all advisable that the working classes of this country should save money. It was much more desirable, he urged, that they should spend all their wages: it was better for trade, and better every way. This was very self-contradictory in the man who saved that purse of guineas, when he was a sergeant in the army, and gave it into the confidential keeping of the woman he intended to marry, when she left America for old England. But Will Cobbett, like the rest of us, was often inconsistent with himself. He did not advise working men to save money—but to keep a pig! And his description of the feast in a poor man’s family at the “pig-killing”—his laudation of the luxuries of spareribs and sausages, and pork pies and delicious devourings of gristles and other

“offals”—and his artistic representation of the glorious pictures hung up in the poor man’s kitchen and sitting-room, in the shape of salted hams and flitches—are among the choicest bits of his writing, in his lively little book “Cottage Economy.”

He did not advise the working classes to economise and save money ; but many of them *did* save, in spite of his mis-teaching. Their forefathers, it was their frequent custom to relate, were a prudent and careful race : in old times, they said, it was a rule among farmers’ servants for a man to save a score or two of good “spade-aces” at least—and for a woman to have purchased an outfit of good “menseful” sheets and blankets, and other household necessities, before lovers thought of marrying. To plunge into a married life in sheer poverty was an act of madness, they said, and the couple that did it deserved to be set in the stocks and pelted with rotten eggs—or, as some severe people said, to be whipped through the streets.

Good luck ! when I think of the stern way in which the improvidence of “beggars’ marriages,” as they were called, were denounced by the poor when I was young, and of the reckless way in which I have seen hundreds of penniless *boys and girls* rush to church or chapel, to be tied together for life—in after years—I almost wonder whether this old earth has not suffered some inexplicable shock, and taken to revolving the wrong way on her axis !

One word on the most serious of all subjects—Religion. Thomas Paine's "Age of Reason " was eagerly read by some working men, more especially in the manufacturing districts ; and some professed themselves to be Deists openly, but these were few, and Atheism was scarcely named : even the working men inclined to Deism seemed to regard it with horror. Of all England, the West Riding of Yorkshire was, perhaps, the region where "freethinking" was most common among working men, and *there* the evil met a powerful counteraction in Methodism. Yorkshire Methodism was, at that time of day, the heartiest and happiest form of piety that was ever experienced in this kingdom. The high standard of holiness maintained by William Bramwell, David Stoner, and others ; the healthy tone of spiritual instruction from William Dawson and many more ; the exhilarating and inspiring music of Leach, whose tunes were felt to be such soul-touching interpretations of Charles Wesley's hymns, together, fed the flame of Christian faith and feeling till it thawed the ice of unbelief, and prevented it from spreading far over the land.

II.

POLITICS OF THE PAST.

POLITICS—and politics so largely involving the fate of the working classes—inevitably crowd upon one's memory, when thinking of the second and third decades of the present century. "Peace and plenty! God save the King!" cried poor men as well as rich men when the "Great Peace" was proclaimed, in 1814. The Peace, however, did not really come till Waterloo was fought, in 1815. But, even before Waterloo was thought of, not only working men but tradesmen and manufacturers began to discover that all their fond expectation of some wonderful prosperity and plenty that Peace would bring, had been only a foolish dream.

The extensive works were closed which had furnished the *materiel* of war; and thousands were thus thrown out of employment. And when more idlers—sailors from the fleet and soldiers from the army—began to mingle with these constrained idlers, their mutterings of discontent soon swelled into groans. With indescribable selfishness, the landlords of England, backed by the clamour of their

farmer-tenantry, demanded that *they* should not suffer, let others suffer what they might. It had been considered certain and sure that foreign corn would be brought in plentifully when war ended, and bread would be cheap. But as farmers could not pay high rents if they had to sell cheap corn, and landlords would not endure any lowering of their rents—the infamous *Corn Law of 1815 was enacted!*

There was no power in the country that could confront the power of the landlords. The administration of that day was composed of the veriest tools of tyranny and oppression that ever held office in this country. The curses of the suffering poor, as they mentioned the names of Castlereagh, and Sidmouth, and Eldon, and Liverpool, seem to ring in my ears yet! Bad harvests added to the misery and sufferings of the poor; and manufacturers began to feel themselves well-nigh driven to despair. Enterprise had been all expectant upon the Peace; but landlord-power smote it on the forehead. Enterprise staggered; and well it might. For the maddened and starving poor threw themselves also as antagonists in its path. They denounced machinery, and wildly strove to destroy it.

This unreasonable discontent with their employers was mingled with a just discontent with their political rulers, and they expressed their just discontent loudly. And, now, the wicked government

sent Oliver, and Castles, and Edwards, their spies, among the poor miserable men, to push them on to overt acts of treason ; and Jeremiah Brandreth and other working men were hung at Derby,—and Thistlewood and his associates were hung in London,—and there would have been more hangings had not the strong common-sense of Wellington put a stop to these atrocities.

“ Sidmouth has discovered another plot,” said one of the peers to him one day as they were leaving the House of Lords.

“ I am tired of their plots,” was the stern reply ; and the Duke set himself to oppose the infamous spy-system, and soon brought it to an end—although he continued to support that long, bad Tory administration of Lord Liverpool.

Lancashire men need not be reminded of “ Peterloo,” and the many other horrors of that time. Imprisonments of the most severe and afflictive nature were endured by many. Hunt was thrown into Ilchester gaol, and Cobbett into Newgate. But, when Cobbett got out again, he fled to America ; and he refused ever to set foot again in England till that bad government was ended. At length Castlereagh cut his own throat ; and, soon after, the Liverpool administration expired of sheer helplessness and incapacity. Canning was placed in power by George the Fourth, through the influence, it was believed, of the king’s mistress, the

Marchioness of Conyngham. But neither Wellington nor Peel would join the new and more enlightened minister. The perpetual worry of office, and the mortifications he had to endure from a powerful opposition, soon killed Canning. The third decade of the nineteenth century closed soon after the death of him who had been a bad ruler, both as regent and king, and with Wellington in full political power, but with such a cry for "Reform" around him as would have frightened any other prime minister.

The history of the Regency and of the Liverpool Administration would form one of the blackest chapters in the History of England, if it were written with truth and fearlessness. The mean, unclean character of George the Fourth, and his cruelty to his wife, would only form subordinate parts of the severe chronicle: accessories to the dark picture, as one may say. "Such a ministry ought never to have existed," Disraeli himself has said of that vile Tory government. The reckless way in which they sacrificed the interests of England, at the peace, seems almost incredible, if we were not sure that it is fact.

"What a blockhead was that Lord Castlereagh of yours," said Napoleon at St. Helena, to one of his English visitors, "to sit sprawling his legs under the table, at the Congress of Vienna, smirking at the stars and ribbons on his breast—the toys with which the allies had bamboozled him—instead of

standing up boldly, and demanding Egypt. It is the real key of your Indian possessions, and you could have had it, or aught else you had asked for, at the end of the war : Antwerp, for instance, and other continental ports, as depôts for your commerce. You had not only given all the strength of your navy and your army to the cause of the allied Sovereigns—but you had subsidized Austria, and Prussia, and other States with millions upon millions, to enable them to carry on the war against me and the French people ; and nothing would have been denied you.”

But that blockheaded and corrupt ministry asked for nothing, and got nothing, as a recompense for all our prodigal expenditure of money and human lives. Their only pride seemed to consist in fawning on the allied Sovereigns, and in trying to destroy freedom and to assimilate English rule to that of the despotisms which were now become triumphant on the Continent.

The faulty provisions of the old poor law began to be fearfully felt, now taxation, scarcity of work, and scarcity of bread, together with misrule, afflicted the land. Thousands who had to pay heavy poor-taxes experienced as much real want as paupers in workhouses, or those who clamoured for out-door relief.

The taxes upon knowledge formed a dense barrier against popular enlightenment. A few dar-



ing men—Cobbett, with his “Register,” and Wooler, with his “Black Dwarf,” and Hetherington, with his radical publications of many names—fought the battle against power, in spite of imprisonment and loss. No thought about the education of the people ever entered the minds of rulers in those days. Education! it was the influence they dreaded above all others.

The Augean stable of bad laws and bad government, at the close of the third decade of this century, needed more than one political Hercules to wield the besom of Reform, in order to cleanse it. “Reform!” cried the Whigs, with the mass of the middle and working classes behind them. “There needs no Reform, and there shall be none!” asserted the Iron Duke—who, with the “Sailor King,” William the Fourth, began now to fill the shop-windows in caricature. One of these pictures represented the king in his state-coach, with the well-known owner of the hooked nose sitting on the box and wielding the whip, with the legend beneath—“The man wot drives the Sovereign.”

The storm soon swelled till even the iron resolve of Wellington quailed, and he gave up office. But, when Earl Grey, and Brougham, and Durham, and Lord John Russell, and Sir James Graham, and the rest took the reins of government, what a stout battle did the Tory Peers fight! Nobody dreamt that they could be so eloquent, even in defence of

their privileges. Their speeches were a wonder, and the debates in the Commons were mighty, and the agitation outside for "The Bill,—the whole Bill,—and nothing but the Bill!" was tempestuous. No political agitation of this nineteenth century has been so great and so general as that which ended in carrying the Reform Bill of 1832.

The generous part which the working classes took in that struggle was too soon forgotten by the middle classes. Although they knew that the Reform Bill would not enfranchise *them*, working men assisted largely to win the triumph by throwing all their energy into the contest. Attwood of Birmingham, and other leading agitators, assured them that their turn should come next—and come soon. *But the promises were all broken.*

The political history of the fourth and fifth decades of the present century, is a history of the anger of working men with the classes and political parties who made these promises and broke them; and of their own vain endeavour, amid suffering and disappointment, to win enfranchisement for themselves. They saw the old municipal corporations broken up, and the middle classes, whom they had helped, rise into local power and importance. They saw the middle classes chiefly benefited by cheap postage. But for *them* there was the new Poor Law with all its severities—severities which were grievously felt even in the happier parts of the country,

but which were regarded as real cruelties by the hand-loom weavers of Lancashire, the stockingers of Leicester, the nail makers of the "Black Country," and other poor human instruments of labour, who were living almost in a state of famine.

The working men in London and Birmingham who had been most active in the agitation for the Reform Bill of 1832, seeing themselves coolly deserted by the Whigs and middle-class leaders, commenced an agitation for their own enfranchisement in 1837; and this movement, under the name of "Chartism," soon grew threatening in many parts of the land. In Lancashire and the West Riding political leaders such as Oastler and Stephens, who were *not* Chartists, swelled the popular discontent by denouncing the new Poor Law. Excesses of feeling were thus raised which issued in violence; and a violent spirit was engendered which lasted for many years. It was in vain that Frost and his associates were exiled for their foolish Newport riot: it was in vain that *four hundred* Chartists were imprisoned in different gaols at one time. Other leaders took their places; and, unless broken down by suffering, the prisoners, when liberated, returned as vigorously as ever to the work of political agitation. For misery gave them crowds of hearers. The enterprize of the country was checked on every hand. The infamous Corn Laws were still preserved by landlord power. The Reformed Parliament was no match for landlords. Manchester men

commenced the Anti-Corn-Law agitation ; but the poor would not join them. They scoffingly pointed the new agitators to their own deeds. "What ! has your Reform Bill failed ?" they cried ; "will not the work of your own hands aid you ? Give *us* the franchise—help *us* to get it—and we will raise you a Parliament that shall speedily abolish the Corn Laws, and all other bad laws."

But no ! The leaders of the Anti-Corn-Law League would have nothing to do with "The People's Charter," which proposed to give the franchise to every man of one-and-twenty years of age, to have a new Parliament yearly, to vote by ballot, to have equal electoral districts, to have no property qualification for members of Parliament, and that the said members should be paid for their services.

That angry resistance against manufacturers who espoused the doctrines of Free Trade, from the operatives in their employ, who demanded "The People's Charter," seems insane now one looks back upon it, at a distance of between thirty and forty years. But the insanity sprang from poverty in despair—poverty trustless of all help from the better-off classes—and we must think of it as mildly as we can. The wisdom and the beneficence of Richard Cobden's doctrines have been richly proven by England in the years which have succeeded that mistaken combat of the poor against their own true interests.

Perhaps manufacturers—or, at least, a powerful

section of them—might have been won over to advocate the extension of the franchise to working men, if Chartists had not shown such ill-judged opposition to the Anti-Corn-Law League. But, when the League had gained its object, working men saw at once, that all hope of getting help from manufacturers for an extension of the franchise was closed. And unless the political earthquake on the Continent, in 1848, had blown the smouldering embers of Chartism again into flame, they would have died out at once. O'Connor's mad land scheme could not have kept Chartism alive. The failure of that scheme served to kill it entirely. Working men had now better and better employ, since Free Trade was established, and enterprise had full scope to push foreign trade. And so they fell to getting bread into the cupboard, and clothes on their backs, and bade "good-night" to politics.

They could not be drawn into political agitation during the "Cotton Famine"; their common-sense taught them that no complaints of grievances could relieve them—there could be no remedy till the American War was ended. They showed no hot desire when Mr. Gladstone timidly proposed *his* partial extension of the franchise. They acknowledged no debt of gratitude when Mr. Disraeli startled his own party and the whole country by introducing household suffrage in the boroughs. They showed still more frigid indifference when the

ballot was proposed and carried ; and if you spoke of it to them, they declared they did not value it at all. But, as trade grew and flourished, they showed they were not without a perception of their own interests as it regards the rewards of labour. They made higher and higher demands—and they obtained them.

“And what better were they for it?” asks some reader ; “working men cannot say they had no share in the prosperity of trade ; but, now stagnation is felt, what provision have they made for it?” “What better,” I ask again, “are they for the higher wages and prosperous times they have had?”

Thank God ! many of them are a great deal better for it. I spend a little time, now and then, in lecturing in various manufacturing towns in Lancashire, and have been deeply gratified by what I have seen and heard. Many a working man has now a house of his own, and some working men are owners of two or three houses. They joined building societies during their prosperity, and this is the fruit of it. Nor are the houses mere hovels. The local boards, in the localities where building is going on, insist on the houses being built in symmetrical rows and on uniform plans. Working men are thus living in houses consisting of several rooms, and having separate accommodations out of doors, with supply of water, etc. Co-operative stores are also spread over almost all the manufacturing districts of

Lancashire and Yorkshire, and their savings in the cost of food enable working men and their families to live, not only without stint of victuals, but on food of better quality.

Remembering how I saw Lancashire men in rags, and heard their threats of physical force, amid their starvation, forty years ago, what I thus witness is more gratifying to me than I can easily express. A man in rags is a scarce sight indeed, now, in the manufacturing parts of Lancashire ; and as for the women, they are now so gay in dress—but I had better say nothing about *them*, lest I get into a scrape !

Be it understood, however, that there is still a degraded class among working men : the depraved devotees of drink, cock-fighting, betting on horses, dog-races, and on pigeon-flying. I am also sorry to say that the poor colliers do not seem to have risen morally, or to have bettered their physical condition, amid the sunshine of prosperity that visited them, ten years ago. The fact that so many of the houses in which the colliers live belong to the owners of the coal-pits, necessarily confines them to live amidst dirt and squalor. It is true that some owners of coal-pits have built better dwellings for the colliers ; but many hundreds of the poor workers yet tenant most miserable abodes. Many a collier has but one room for his whole family, be it ever so numerous. It is by no means an uncommon sight, in a collier-

village, to see, in one corner, the wife lying-in, and merely divided from the open room by a screen of sacking, or old clothes—while the husband is eating his meal by the fireside, and his boys and girls are eating their portion, some on stools and some sitting on the floor.

The degradation to which I have often seen poor colliers reduced, in their mode of living—the thought of the long hours of danger which the poor fellows have to spend in the deep mine—and the hard-hearted carelessness for their condition of those who get thousands by their labour—have often made me writhe with indignation, and wonder that the lowly toilers bore their hardships so quietly. I have mingled a good deal with the colliers in the course of my lecturing life, and have spent many hours in talking with them. Many of them have fine, generous minds; and I feel sure it would be possible to raise them as a class, by generous efforts.

III.

MORE CHANGES.

HOW strangely uneven our lot in life is cast ! Forty years ago, I had to undergo two years' imprisonment in Stafford Gaol, for trying to get the franchise for working men. The attempt was called 'sedition and conspiracy,' at that time of day. *Now*, in this year of Grace, 1885, both Whigs and Tories have declared that working men *ought* to have the franchise, and have given it to *all*, throughout the land, who are householders !

'No wonder that you chuckle about it, old fellow,' says some reader ; 'but when the Redistribution Bill is agreed to, what do you think will be the result of the first election ?' I do not think it is the *first* election that is of so much importance. What will be done when the country has settled down, and accustomed itself to regard the new state of things as what ought to be and must be ? That is the really important question. No doubt many are casting an eye, often in fear, at the dark future. 'What will be done with the Established Church ?' 'What will be done with the Bishops ?' 'What will be done with

the House of Lords?' 'What will be done about the Land?' and a dozen of other ominous questions will be passing through many minds.

'But, I suppose,' some will say, '*you* have no fears as to what may come about in Old England, when you are gone?' You are mistaken who think so. *I have great fears.* And, chiefly, because working men, after all that has been done, and is still doing, for the education of the young, have no real teachers in politics. So long as that Chartist agitation lasted, even with all its faults, it served to indoctrinate the poor, starving toilers into the knowledge that they had political rights, as well as other people. But when Corn-Law Repeal gave the toilers bread and something to spare—and Feargus O'Connor's mad Land scheme disgraced the Chartist agitation—the workers, as I have already said, gave up politics, and for several years there was agitation for Disestablishment of the National Church, agitation for Atheism, agitation for Anti-Vaccination, agitation for the 'Claimant,' agitation for teetotalism,—agitations many—but there was no agitation for giving an increase of the franchise to working men. Oh, yes! There was one agitator, poor Joseph Arch, who urged that half-a-million of agricultural labourers were all without votes, and ought to have them. But who urged that the franchise should be given to lodgers—to all men of twenty-one years of age, who were *not* householders? Yet, who does not

see, *now*, that *that* will be accomplished, and very shortly ?

The last measure of suffrage given by Parliament—Mr. Disraeli's Household Suffrage in the Boroughs—was the most corrupt suffrage that could be devised—although some foolish people regarded it as a great boon. Mr. Disraeli knew what he was about when he proposed it. He knew that it was the suffrage which would include the most ignorant, the most dependent, the most needy, and the most easily bought, of all working men : the men advanced in years, the men who are without education, who have children round them craving every day for bread, who are feeling the approach of helpless old age, and are fearful of losing their employment, and so are ready to do anything for a little money, or to ingratiate themselves into favour with their employers. Chartists saw all this, and *taught* all this more than forty years ago. They always protested against mere household suffrage in the boroughs as the most corrupt suffrage that could be invented, and the surest suffrage to serve the cause of the Tories. No old Chartist was surprised when Lancashire returned Tories at the first election after the suffrage was given to householders in the boroughs.

“What use have working men made of the suffrage now they have got it ?” ask some people. “What encouragement is there to enlarge the suffrage, when we see working men crowding to the poll to

return Dr. Kenealy?" They who ask this seem to forget who the working men were who did this. They were *not* the unmarried men of one-and-twenty and upwards, who are members of mechanics' institutes, and book clubs, and young men's Christian associations,—*for they have no votes*. They were the poor degraded colliers, iron workers, and potters, who bet on pigeon-flying, dog-racing, and dog-fighting, and who loiter away Monday and Tuesday in each week, standing in the market-place, or drinking and smoking in low public-houses.

When Gladstone, filled with noble and generous impulse, cried out in that famous debate—"Are they not our own flesh and blood?"—if Disraeli had sprung up and said "*They are* ; and therefore let us enfranchise all alike—but above all, do not let us leave out the most intelligent and moral of the working classes"—it would have been more to his credit than all the witty, smart things he ever said in the House of Commons put together. If we wish to raise men, it cannot be by denying them what we demand for ourselves—to be governed by our own consent. Nor should we be over keen in marking their blunders when they first begin to exercise the franchise. Who can wonder at their errors when it is remembered that no Government, for so many years, put forth any effort to educate the people. Nay, that the strongest and direst struggle by men in power was made against enlightenment of the people.

One oftens hears the complaint that working men do not attend places of worship. But it seems to be forgotten that they are only like other people in this respect—that *they are no worse than their betters*. Tens of thousands of the middle classes in London and in all our large towns seldom or never enter a place of worship. Nor are the upper classes remarkable for their strict observance of the Lord's Day. I always feel the censure with which some people visit the working classes to be so hard and unreasonable, because they are expected to be good—although their betters do not set them the example ; and their rulers, in the past, have striven to brutalize them, rather than to exalt them in morals and intelligence. Instead of complaining of them, let us all make what effort we can to raise them.

Building of more fine chapels will not attract them. The Gospel of Christ must be carried to them—to their very doors ; and it is time that it was done—for they are still imitating their betters : the Secularists are beginning to call themselves “Darwinians !” Will Christian young men—I mean such as are born with good common-sense—try to get the real anointing from above, and go out into the lanes and alleys and squares where working men live, and preach Christ to them ? Mere muffs will not do for the work. The speakers must be able to talk, and must have something to talk about.

The more knowledge they have of God's word the better, the more knowledge they have of human nature the better, and the more readily they can express their meaning in terse, plain English, the better. Thousands of such teachers are wanted—thousands who are willing to go out into the highways and hedges—or into the very dens of squalor and wretchedness, and proclaim Christ. They need not wait to be sent by the churches. Let them take their commission from the compelling sense of *duty*: *that* is the best “call” that any man can have. The churches will not be backward to offer them the right-hand of fellowship, when they are known to be doing good. Comparing the characters of our working men with others, I have often spoken plainly, and shall do so as long as I live. I wrote some plain words in 1877, and I think I may as well repeat them now. I do not think they will do any harm; and I believe they are as much needed now as they were then.

“Fifty feather beds pawned by the workies, in two days, to get the means for having their usual July railway-trip! This has just been enacted in the old cathedral city where I am writing: the old city which has lost its slow-coach character, by the introduction of large iron-works, which employ some thousands of human hands. The workers threw money away, as if it were dirty water, when they were in full work and had high wages; and, now

they are on short work and get little money, comparatively, they pawn their beds, and plunge into debt, to get their revel. Small shopkeepers know what they have to expect: an account-book filled with the names of many who will not be out of debt for months to come, and of some who will never pay: an increase of their embarrassments: sleepless nights and anxious days, and, perhaps, ruin. And what do the workers gain by their revel? Health? No: but the loss of it, to many. They return home jaded; and go back to their labour with a feeling of sour discontent that they have to work "on dead horse," as they phrase it—to work merely to pay their debts. And, if they do not try to pay their debts—but spend their money at a new shop, as they too often do—their violation of conscience leads to a lower sink of immorality: perhaps, to utter recklessness about right and wrong.

"Thus far about the workies; what about their 'betters'? The *Contemporary Review*, for this month of August, contains an article on "The Horse as an instrument of gambling" that will make some moral people open their eyes widely. The writer announces "the public accession of the Prince of Wales to the turf"; and assures us that "the running of horses has become surrounded by all kinds of temptations: the horse is in the hands of gamblers. *Gentlemen* (the italics are the writer's, not mine) degrade themselves by dirtying their

hands with a betting-book. Men bribe, and stable-boys become corrupt in consequence of the turf having been selected as one of the places where people make haste to be rich. The elements of chicanery which now attend the pastime of horse-racing have given it a bad odour ; and it would be a thousand times better that horse-racing should altogether cease, than that the race courses of Great Britain should continue to be seminaries of swindling."

The writer also tells us that, last year, " forty-four persons won from £200 to £300 each, forty-five gained sums ranging from £300 to £500, sixty won amounts ranging from £500 to £994, and sixty-three persons won sums of £1,000 and upwards," by betting on horse-races,—while, " the owner of the horse which won the Cesarewitch of last year was able to back it to win him £100,000." But the most remarkable statement is one which this writer quotes from a popular magazine—" The chief jockey of the period earns in fees as large an income as the Lord High Chancellor of England ; and his fees and presents are said to have amounted last year to over £13,000. In all probability the three principal jockeys of England will earn, or at all events receive, more money in a year than the whole professional staff of a modern university !"

So their " betters " set but a bad example of morals to the working classes. And noblemen and

gentlemen cannot plead that it is hard, after months of continuous labour, if they cannot have one or two holidays in the year: for noblemen and *gentlemen* keep holiday all the year round. Nor can they plead that they are tempted to indulge in a revel which they cannot afford, by the offer of railway directors (who *must* make a revenue, by hook or by crook, now their receipts are so low) to convey them one hundred miles for a shilling, give them three or four days for enjoyment, and bring them back for another shilling. Nor can the petty dissipation of the worker's railway trip be likened to the gigantic sin whose enormities are chronicled so partially by the writer in the *Contemporary*—for it opens the sluices for a deluge of other sins, and drags thousands of the working classes into the foul mire of gambling.

Horse-racing means gambling; and all who join in it, know it: they know it means vice on a large scale—but they engage in it, nevertheless. And many of them do it in spite of the dread rebuke of conscience. My good and kind friend, Dr. Sale, the late Vicar of Sheffield, once gave me an affecting account of a conversation he had in a railway carriage with one of his parishioners, a manufacturer, who was returning from Epsom the day after the Derby, with considerable winnings. The faithful vicar struck home, and soon discovered that the man, with all his seeming elation, was consciously

guilty ; and showed it, not only by the changes of his countenance, but by his desperate attempts to "change the subject." It was in vain, however, that he strove to get out of the Christian preacher's power. The vicar pressed the charge of guilt, till the sweat started to the gambler's brow, and he cried, "For God's sake, say no more! I know it is wrong. I dare not reflect upon it!" Yet the vicar did not shrink from his duty ; but still urged his reproof, till he thought he had reason to believe that the man would give up his sin.

More changes! Among them, we have lately had one which does not come often. We have got a new Archbishop of Canterbury : Dr. Benson. My thoughts about good, departed Dr. Sale, and his rebuke of horse-race gambling, put into my mind another thought:—Could the new Archbishop be persuaded and encouraged also to do a bit of real conscience work, in higher quarters?

While we had Dr. Benson in old Lincoln, as canon of our noble cathedral, he won a very high reputation, for what were held to be his great qualities and salutary influence, among young clergymen and aspirants for clerical office. In Cornwall, as Bishop of Truro, he was also regarded as being highly instrumental in the same kind of work.

Dr. Benson now ranks next to the Royal Family : above the Lord High Chancellor and Archbishop of York, and above all mere Dukes, Marquises, Earls,

and so forth, in the land. If I wished to speak a word in the ear of the Prince of Wales, and were to present my request at the door of Marlborough House, or Sandringham, doubtless, a policeman would tell me, very peremptorily, to "walk off"—or he would take me to the lock-up. But, Dr. Benson can have an interview with the heir to the Crown, almost at any time that he asks for it. Will he act like a *real* Christian minister, and ask for such an interview, and talk to the Prince like a real Christian minister?

Thus :—

"Your Royal Highness is, doubtless, a little curious, from the tone of my note to you, saying that I wished for a strictly private interview,—to know what it is that I want to say to you. I must tell you, at once, that I am come to make an appeal to your conscience. By what I hold to be the Providence of God, I am placed next to your illustrious family, in the order of precedence; and I am placed thus, with the concurrence, at least, if not by the immediate wish of my sovereign, your Most Gracious mother. Thus doubly compelled, I feel I must perform my conscientious duty, or pronounce myself to be a self-condemned man.

"*I* am constituted your spiritual adviser. *You* are become the avowed and openly proclaimed patron of horse-racing! Does not your Royal Highness know that the most current literature of

the day declares horse-racing means gambling? And do you not feel that you have been won over by bad advisers to take a most unworthy position?

“Gambling? That is not all. Horse-racing is become the vice of vices—the curse of the land. For all ranks are drawn ruinously into the encouragement of it. And the reports are so current—they are, in fact, in almost everybody’s mouth—of the huge SIN which holds high festival at great horse-race times, that I cannot suppose you to be ignorant of it. Do you not know what goes on in Doncaster, for instance, during the great race-week, in each September? Importation of scores of prostitutes—immigration of scores of practised thieves, thimble-riggers, pick-pockets, gamblers, and cheats of every description—liquor shops open at night—houses of ill-fame all open—drinking, cursing, swearing, and fighting—in plain words, ‘Hell broke loose, in the slums of Doncaster!’

“Now, I appeal to you, most illustrious prince—I am content on my bended knee to appeal to you—whether you can for one moment continue to hold the infamous and scandalous position report—uncontradicted by yourself and confirmed by your practice—assigns to you. Will you not yield to me at once, and say, ‘I will give it all up, and never more, either go to see a horse-race, or bet upon one’?

“Never mind the jeers of those who have been so

proud of their bad conquest over you—the gamblers and black-legs, titled and untitled ! You will have the gratitude, the faithful attachment and heartfelt love of all Christian men in the land.

“Do you not feel that *that* will be an inexpressibly precious exchange for the bad honour rendered you by men with whom you were so lately associated?

“I will not ask your forgiveness. Your Royal Highness knows that I have only done my bounden duty. May God help you to receive my request with instant approval, and give you a long life, and a happy reign, over a grateful and happy people.”

Dr. Benson ! *Dare you do this ?* Latimer would have done it, if he could live again, and fill your place. Will *you* do it ?

IV.

SORROWFUL THOUGHTS ABOUT STRIKES.

I HAVE been so bold as to address a word to the Primate of all England ; and, I trust, his Grace will think I have addressed him in real courtesy. I am sure I meant to do so.

Let me, now, return to my more-accustomed work : that of talking to working men. I wrote as follows, in 1876 :—

“ An intelligent Scottish friend tells me in a letter, the other day, that the prolonged strike of the colliers of Fifeshire, and the iron workers of Glasgow, is inflicting suffering upon the strikers which they endeavour in vain to conceal. The haggard looks of many of the men proclaim their wretchedness. The deprivation which themselves and their families undergo is so great that weak constitutions are giving way, and some are dying for want of food. It is the common talk in the collier villages of Fife, when a corpse is carried out to be buried, “ There goes another victim of the strike ! ”

The seeming heroism there is in all this—the resistance to the death of what they consider to be

wrong—would be admirable, if such heroism were not folly. When furnaces are being blown out, when manufacturers are working their mills on short time, when scarcity of work is the outcry increasingly at home, and trade seems paralysed on the Continent, it seems worse than folly—it seems madness for working men to play the ruinous game of strike.

No man of common-sense and right reasoning disputes the right to strike, on the part of the working men, when they judge that they are not receiving just wages. But what it is both just and wise to do at one time, it may be very unjust and very unwise to do at another time. And, as the *New York Tribune* observes, “this is a poor season for strikes, since the supply of skilled labour is evidently in excess of demand in almost every department of industry.”

And, then, the writer goes on to say—“Of the many strikes which we have been called upon to chronicle during the past few months, we do not now recall one which has accomplished the purpose, either of raising wages or of preventing their diminution; for, there are certain matters which settle themselves, sooner or later, without argument, and the price of labour happens to be one of them. Take the whole mass of strikes, since they came into fashion, and it will be found that they have cost the employed much more than the employer.” It is the old lesson, although repeated in America; and work-

ing men are still more unwilling to listen to it in America, than they are in our own country.

The recent railway riots in America furnish a lesson even for English thinkers. "The most alarming feature of the whole disturbance," says a writer in the *Daily News*, "was the evidence it gave that there is all over the States a class of working men who believe themselves to have a common cause against employers. It was not alone railway workers of any kind who kept up the struggle. In every place where the strike appeared (we may speak of the strike as if it were one homogeneous pest, like a disease) its numbers were reinforced by labourers of all kinds, who ran to bear arms in the cause, as if they and the rioters were bound together by the ties of a common nationality or religion, or some similar bond, which, in times of trial, is supposed to make brothers of all who acknowledge it." And then the writer tries to solve the mystery of this tendency to band together against employers, in all American labourers. He affirms that because they are chiefly adventurers who merely left Europe to get better pay, they cannot have any care for the laws and social order of a country in which they are strangers, and were sure when hard times came to be unruly in their discontent ; and, not only so, but to be ready to combine in an unruly way to get it.

I cannot help thinking that this writer's probe does not reach half the depth of the sore. The state

of feeling I witnessed among ill-paid, starving working men in our old Chartist time, and before the abolition of the Corn Laws, was very much like that which seems to prevail in America, in "hard times." They were nearly all of the "class of working men who believe themselves to have a common cause against employers." However unreasonable their belief was in many instances, it *was* their belief. I discerned little among them of what this writer talks of as "that common devotion to the laws and social order of the country that its own born citizens, however poor, might be expected to have." It was not "devotion to the laws," but fear of the strength of the laws, that withheld starving working men, in 1842, from becoming generally unruly in this country. And even fear would not have withheld them, if they could have procured arms as easily as the Americans, from displaying their unruliness in a signal fashion ; and it would have been towards their employers *first*, from the unreasoning belief that employers were the chief authors of their suffering.

That a portion of our working population are growing wiser—that they no longer reason in this *unreasoning* way—was proved by the sensible conduct of Lancashire working men during the cotton famine. An old incendiary strove, in one corner, to stir up the old bad feeling against employers, but he could not succeed. The common-sense of the workies taught them that their own

employers were not the cause of the "cotton famine," and they did not listen to him. I wish I could believe that equal enlightenment is shared by working men generally, throughout Great Britain. I fear it is not. Their persistent disposition to strike, at a time when employers find it difficult to keep their foothold in the slippery and downward state of trade, seems to afford no proof of general enlightenment among working men.

But why is it that they are not enlightened? If the Board of Arbitration, composed of employers and employed, which Mr. Mundella succeeded in establishing at Nottingham, can preserve the framework knitters from strikes, why should not Boards of Arbitration have the like success elsewhere? No class of workers were sunk lower than the poor framework knitters at one period, nor had any class of workers a stronger "belief that they had a common cause *against* employers." Arbitration peacefully settles all their incipient disputes now, and Nottingham framework knitters see that they have a common cause *with* employers. Is there any reason why coal owners and colliers, iron masters and iron workers, should not come to a like sensible and peaceful agreement? I cannot think that poor colliers are beyond enlightenment, or are viciously disposed as a class. I have said so before, readers know; and I believe that a hearty manifestation of kindness, on the part of their employers, would

prevail with them, as it usually does with other working men. As for our iron workers, they are on a level for intelligence with any class of workers in the kingdom ; and I know no reason why generous dealing should not equally prevail with them.

No doubt, I shall be told that many colliers and iron workers are so defiant in their attitude towards employers, that no attempt to bring them to reason *by* employers could succeed. I should like, however, to see the attempt humanely and earnestly made *by* employers ; and I devoutly wish it may *soon* be made. For, if what intelligent and experienced observers are saying be true—that we must not look for a speedy improvement of trade—the condition of working men may become so severely straitened, as to bring back the fearful discontent of 1842. From my remembrance of what that was, I humbly pray—God forbid it !

In the month of September 1877 (in the small periodical conducted by my friend, Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown—which I mentioned in the Preface), I wrote as follows :—

The Working Men's Question has not decreased, but grown in interest ominously of late. The old barbarity of evictions from their cottages of the colliers in the county of Durham, has been renewed amidst the yells and execrations of the women, surrounded by several bands of police. Weather, such as we have had in this country for some time, will

render camping out in the open air a terrible ordeal for the poor women and children ; and must soon put an end to the strikes at the Ryhope and Beaulieu collieries. A riot, on a small scale, is reported, by some of the cotton hands at Burnley ; while ten thousand hands, it is affirmed, have turned out on strike at Bolton, resolved not to submit to a reduction of 5 per cent. in their wages. Several thousands of colliers and other workmen are on strike in various parts of the country ; and the "lock-out" on the Clyde of shipwrights, engineers, and other hands is not ended, although there seems to be a good prospect of both men and masters agreeing to an arbitration. This 'lock-out' has lasted since May, and must have entailed an incalculable amount of suffering on the workmen and their families. Must it not, also, have been a time of great sacrifice on the part of the employers ? Where the fault has been, it is not easy to decide, but the whole affair involves a great blunder—and a guilty blunder, somewhere.

Meantime, the poor, starved colliers of Fife, after a 'lock-out' of fourteen weeks, have been permitted to resume work at a reduction of 10 instead of 20 per cent. in their wages. One naturally asks—Why did not the coal owners say 10 per cent. at first ? It is impossible to decide, without a great deal of information which is never given in the newspapers, who was really at fault, in the beginning, in this

case. But, knowing that starvation has ended the lives of some members of the colliers' families in Fife and Clackmannan, it may again be affirmed that this 'lock-out' also has been a great blunder, and a guilty blunder likewise—let the guilt rest where it may.

With the colliers of South Staffordshire, a struggle of a somewhat different kind has been attempted by the coal owners. The men were asked to work nine-and-a-half hours a day, instead of eight. The words in which the men expressed their refusal prove that intelligence is growing, even in the 'Black Country.' They said "they were determined not to return to a condition of labour that has stunted the minds and bodies of the mining population. They would not shorten their lives by the means by which they have to live. Masters had taught them it was unwise to exhaust capital when the interest should yield sufficient to live upon; and their labour was their capital. Labour should be counted by the exhaustive efforts put forth, and not by minutes and hours merely." The men also offered to work on the double-shift system—by which the coal owners would be able to work their mines sixteen hours a day, and thus save nearly half their general business expenses. The reasonableness of the men was fully shown by a meeting of their delegates with some of the leading owners; they consented to accept a reduction of

sixpence a day in working thick coal, and threepence a day in working thin coal—and the quarrel was put an end to, and work resumed.

The proposal of the employers, and the sensible and temperate resistance of the men, in this last case, is a proof that the poor colliers are not always wrong-headed, even in the Black Country ; and that they are sometimes more reasonable than their employers, is proved in Northumberland also—if the decision given by Mr. Herschell, M.P., be correct. He was appointed umpire in arbitration between the coal owners and miners in that county ; and gave it as his award that the employers had failed to make out a case for reduction of wages.

The fact that the London Building Trades are not only continuing their demand for higher wages, but that they are gradually winning their demand—by firm after firm yielding it—seems, at first sight, an anomaly in the present increasingly bad trade. Yet there is no mystery in it. Many people who made a good deal of money when trade was so good, and who find they can make no money by trade now, are putting their savings into the erection of new houses, with the belief that trade will again be prosperous, and the houses be wanted. And, although hundreds of houses are empty in London and the suburbs, and scores are becoming empty daily, this rage for building continues. The working men know that masters are

making new contracts to build daily, and thus confidently urge their demand for tenpence the hour for their labour.

Whether all the Building Firms will yield, or how long the struggle will continue, depends *not* entirely on the continuance of the rage for building—which must cease when people know that houses are deserted by thousands ; but on another most fearful fact not only for the working builders, but for *all* working men—the return by shoals of working men from America, with disappointed hopes, and, in some cases, in destitution. These men are sure to be clamorous for employment ; and in bitterness of feeling will be likely to snatch at work wherever they can get it, without caring for the interests of other working men.

One does not covet the sorry reputation of a gloomy prophet ; but I must avow my fear that the approaching winter will be a very troublous one. Generation after generation has been permitted to pass away without the institution of a great system of arbitration, or united council between employers and employed : ignorance and selfishness are still left to fight out every petty battle between them ; and when the dread pressure of a bad harvest and bad trade united, comes to be felt by increased numbers of working men and their families, and insolvency begins to prevail among employers, my heart forebodes that we shall enter on a period of

such difficulty as the population of this country have not experienced for many years bygone.

What is to prevent the impending misery? Neither strikes on the part of the workmen, nor lock-outs on the part of employers, can form a remedy. It is an old proverb that common misery makes men friends. I have often seen the truth of the saying fulfilled. My poor friend, Willie Thom, the poet, had a remarkable saying: "If it were not for the Poor, the Poorer would perish." And he was right. The rich and well-to-do know nothing of the very poor. It is only the poor that know of their existence; and from my childhood, as a child of the poor, how often have I seen the poor combine to help and relieve cases of extreme wretchedness. They ran to do it, I remember well, with eagerness and tears of sympathy. When employers multiply who are really in as great a strait as working men, will the sense of common misery enlarge their sympathy with suffering working men?

Hitherto, wherever, and to whomsoever, among employers, I make mention of working men, the reply is—"They should have taken care of their money while they were so well paid for their labour: they are always improvident." And I always reply—What you say is too true; but *they are as good as their betters*. Were not coal owners avaricious when trade was at its height of thrift? Did they not set the evil example to the colliers who were clamorous

for higher wages and shorter hours of work?—and are all who belong to the upper and middle classes provident?

Working men are likely to pay a heavy penalty for *their* folly. Their greedy demand for higher and higher wages sent up the price of eatables and wearables, the price of fuel and the rents of houses; but they cannot *bring down* prices and rents, now they have to live on low wages. This seems never to be remembered in the time of prosperity; and the counsellors to whom working men give ear, seem utterly unaware of the consequences of a reckless demand for higher and higher wages. One of these Oracles—a very favourite one with many workies—was present at a great meeting of colliers at Rotherham the other day; and a local paper says, “He also spoke of the right of workmen to combine, and asked what would have been the position of the colliers if they had all united as one man? If the masters had wanted a reduction, the men might have stopped their output, the price of the commodity would have risen, and then they would have got their fair remuneration for raising it.”

The speaker seemed to forget that many trades besides colliers might play at the same game: stinting production, in order to send up prices. What a state of things we should soon have, if such a game were played by *all* the trades in Britain! Houses would be let at a rack-rent, eatables and

wearables would be priced like jewellery. But such counsellors of the poor man seem blind to the fact that we cannot live by ourselves, but have other countries to compete with. Their counsel would soon come to naught, if they could persuade working men to adopt it, and put it in practice. They have never been able to do that, hitherto ; and they have but a sorry prospect of being able to do it in the coming winter—when thousands, and hundreds of thousands of the working classes of this country may be brought face to face with the gaunt demon of Starvation.

V.

CAUSES OF VICISSITUDE IN TRADE.

THE starvation did *not* come in the fearful form that I thought it would, in the winter of 1877-8. But it has come in a most distressing form, in many parts of the land, during the concluding months of the last year, and the opening months of the present year. In Sunderland, Stockton, Middlesborough, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Hull, Dundee, and other large towns, the want and misery have been great, although generous relief has been actively afforded. Nor have some smaller towns been without their visitation of want and sorrow. Here, in ancient Lincoln, the great iron firms, which are modern great features of the ancient city, have been on short time, or have dismissed many of their hands. There are said to be one thousand workmen out of work, in this city, at the time I am writing. Soup-kitchens and other modes of relief have been provided by those who have good hearts and good pockets ; and so much suffering has been lessened.

“And does it not all seem very mysterious?” I often hear tradesmen and commercial men ask one

another. "We all remember how trade began to look up, in 1868 and 1869; and how that marvellous prosperity began in 1870, and swelled in 1871, 1872, 1873; and how the decline began in 1874,—though we were so unwilling to believe it—but which grew worse and worse—till, now, *ten* miserable years are gone, we are in this almost hopeless condition. It seems as if Old England's day was gone, and the dark remediless night had set in."

Nay: nor is Germany's day gone—nor is the true prosperity of France gone, or that of America, either. "But what has become of trade?" asks another bewildered soul; "where has it gone to?" My good friend, it has neither gone from us to America, or France, or Germany, or any other land on the Continent, for other nations are as badly off as we are. "But do you think the same sorry sights are seen in America and France and Germany, as we see in England—troops of unemployed men, and empty houses almost without number?" The answer is often given in the newspapers. It would be tiresome for me to give the items which are so often repeated. But, let it be noted that the items are always given in what may be called connectional groups—showing that people are trying to trace out the real causes of distress.

Thus, it is observed by a few who think for themselves, that if farmers have to sell their wheat at 3*s.*

per quarter—which is less than it costs growing, they cannot buy machinery to till their land ; and so we need not wonder that many of the great iron firms have hundreds of agricultural machines on hand, in England, and in their stores at Pesth and Vienna ; and then, of course, it follows that thousands of men will have to stroll the streets, in unwilling idleness ; and they will crowd, for lodgings, wherever they can find room, and empty houses will abound. I cannot describe the distress I felt last year, in re-visiting some of our large towns. ‘ This House to Let ’—‘ This House to Let,’ marked half the houses in many streets, and I did not wonder when people told me, in each town, how many dwelling-houses were reckoned to be empty : thousands in some towns.

Nor let any one imagine, after all we have read of the ‘ Protection ’ doctrines which have been adopted in the United States of America, that her condition is any better than our own. Wages have been reduced in the States, ten, twenty, and even more per cent., in some instances. One of the newspapers told us, very lately, that working men were leaving America by shoals, and that from two to three hundred stonemasons have returned to one district in Scotland. The American iron firms are sharing disaster with those in England, for the farmers on the Mississippi cannot sell their wheat at remunerating prices, and being, besides, heavily burthened with

mortgages, cannot buy machinery: so *they* cannot buy machinery any more than our English farmers; and 100,000 men are unemployed in New York.

Every man of reflection knows what is the root-evil—the primary cause—of all this distress which, periodically, but most surely, afflicts nations. WAR—demon War—hellish War—is that root-evil—that primary cause. Who does not know that nearly all History is a record of wars? The earliest men made discoveries—they learned to hew rocks and trees—they raised great houses and temples: they carved splendid sculptures. Then they quarrelled and robbed one another, and destroyed what they had made with so much labour, and slew their thousands on either side, until utter exhaustion compelled them to desist. Anon, the same mad game broke out in another quarter of the earth—then, in another and another; and so on through all the centuries to the present time.

After each season of devastation the waste had to be repaired, as well and as quickly as men could repair it—but it was often slowly and imperfectly, and amidst much leanness and suffering.

Now just repeat the glance I took at the Nineteenth Century, and convince yourself, reader—if you need conviction—that up to this present day, it is but the old historic mad game repeated.

Fortunes were made by a few who dealt in the *materiel* of war, in the great Napoleonic time; but

there was no general prosperity. Nor could there be while Napoleon's 'Berlin Decrees' and our 'Orders in Council' were in force—in other words, the 'Continental System,' which shut up the ports of Europe. And, after Waterloo, when the people expected cheap bread, and tradesmen thought their halcyon days would come, what followed? Starvation and distraction among the poor, breaking of machinery, blanketeering, and Peterloo massacre; and for the middle classes, insolvencies, proclamations of failure, thick and fast, amazing everybody and filling everybody with dismay, except the Regent: for he only thought or cared for his own vile indulgences. As King George the Fourth, he was no better. Some thought that when old Van went out of office, and the Hon. Fred. John Robinson became Chancellor of the Exchequer, *he* would discover some remedy for the bad state of things. And, if his own vaunting declaration in the House of Commons could have been taken for truth, a remedy had indeed been found. The country, he asserted, was in an unexampled state of prosperity: the Agricultural interest—the Mercantile interest—the Manufacturing interest—*all* were in a state of undoubted prosperity! In a few weeks after, *smash* went the Banks in almost every part of the land, and consternation and despair sat on every countenance! "Hurrah for Prosperity Robinson!" shouted Cobbett. And Robinson kept the nickname till he became Lord Goderich: for

Cobbett's nicknames were like the burs that mischievous boys throw on your coat : they *stuck*.

The Reform Bill came, in spite of the Duke's 'strong government' and the Tories ; but, although seventeen dreary years had passed, the exhaustion caused by the vast war with France and Napoleon was not ended : trade and commerce did not recover prosperity. And even when the potato famine in Ireland gave Peel an opportunity for obeying the convictions he professed he had derived from 'the unadorned eloquence of Richard Cobden,' and the Corn Laws were abolished,—it took a long time for manufacturers to get facilities for the full use of their golden opportunity. "We had to contrive how, and in what way, best to develop the cotton manufacture," they used to say in Lancashire.

And they did develop it. To see the building of mills in 1859 and 1860, you would have said they meant to cover the whole County Palatine with them. "When is all this monstrous building of mills to end ?" I said to aged Peter Whitehead, in his own house at Rawtenstall, in 1860. "*When we can get no more cotton,*" replied the old enthusiastic manufacturer : "we can manufacture for all t' world !" He little imagined what was coming—the American Civil War, when *they could get no more cotton*—except the coarse, unassorted stuff from Surat : the manipulation of which was a torture to the poor workers. "Lord, send us some cotton !"

cried one of these, in a prayer-meeting. "Amen, Lord !" responded another, "but not Surat !" When the time came they resumed their hard work and hard strife to get money ; and they have succeeded, though many weak strugglers have had to go down. So it has also been with the manufacturers of Yorkshire.

After the great exhaustive wars in the Crimea, and that of the Indian Mutiny, England undertook no very great war. So in 1868 and 1869, trade began to grow vigorous, for men now felt confidence in embarking capital. And in 1870 to 1874, we had a most marvellous increase of trade, for we had to supply a great part of the *materiel* of war to France and Germany, in their fierce struggle ; and our home trade grew mightily—for men spent money luxuriously, since it seemed to be pouring into their lap, with but a small effort to win it, on their part. Thousands spent their money as fast as they got it, both of the middle and working classes. Others took care of it—so that when the decline commenced in 1875, they shrewdly withdrew from trade. And now, in any of the towns of England which shared that wondrous prosperity, you may see scores of villas which were built in the halcyon days, and they are still inhabited by well-to-do people.

Men have practised what some people call 'hoarding' during these years of decline, in a notable way. They refuse to re-embark in trade, seeing no branch

of it which can boast of what they consider to be real thrift. The most serious decline, or that which has been felt most severely, has doubtless been in the iron trades. And, during this last winter, the misery seems to have cumulated in these branches.

“But why is it that dearth of trade has smitten other nations as well as ourselves?” Because the same diabolical exhaustive cause has made suffering common to other nations. Thus, the Crimean War cost 750,000 lives of human beings, and 340 millions of money : Russia, England, France, and Sardinia contributed to swell these items. The Italian War of 1859 cost 45,000 lives, and 60 millions of money : these items must be divided between Italy, Austria, and France. The war between Prussia and Austria, in 1866, cost 45,000 lives and 66 millions of money ; and the terrible war between Germany and France, which seems to have ended the Napoleons, cost France 155,000 and Germany 60,000 lives ; and the two powers together 500 millions of money. Let not the American Civil War be forgotten, for it cost the North 280,000 lives and 940 millions of money, and the South 520,000 lives, and 460 millions of money.

These are the exhaustive causes. Let no man wonder at the failure and misery which has followed, and that it is spread so widely. “But you think that the nations will recover their prosperity?” Yes : *but not in haste*. Again, I contend that our

experience of the earlier part of this century ought to teach us this. I mean the long years of disappointed expectation, and fruitless struggles, and much fearful want, included in the history that followed the crowning victory of Waterloo, to the carrying of Corn-Law Repeal.

“What would hasten the arrival of that prosperity we covet so much?” The cessation of all War. For not only would the waste of lives and millions end, but the ‘hoarders’ would feel a return of confidence to venture anew on trade and commerce, in every land. Let all men use their influence for Peace, who long for Prosperity.

Old Hobbes of Malmesbury used to say that War was the natural state of Man. In one of the opening pages of his noble ‘Rights of Man,’ Thomas Paine says if Man had never fallen in Eden, he would never have needed any political Government. And he might have said there could have been no War. Ay, ay, Thomas Hobbes, you were right: War *is* the natural state of Man, for the natural state of Man is a *fallen* state.

What then? Do we give up ourselves as irremediably lost, because we are born with sinful natures? No, thank God, we know that a remedy has been provided, and we may receive a regenerate nature. Neither are we to give up the world to an endless devastation of wars. We may be drawing nearer to the universal reign of Peace than some

folks think. Why should our Colonies be left to separate from us, when any of them imagine they are strong enough to defend themselves—and thus be not only exposed, but as it were, tempted to pursue the old sinful course of things, and accept a fight with the first nation which opposes them? That idea of an ‘Imperial Confederation,’ when it was first enunciated by my friend, Rt. Hon. W. E. Forster, M.P., laid very powerful hold of my mind. I have eagerly watched, all along, for signs of its recognition and approval, by influential thinkers; and I am unspeakably glad, now, to find that men of rank and intelligence are declaring their acceptance of it. I most devoutly trust that opposition to it will soon cease; and all who desire the peace of mankind and the cessation of wars will say, “Now we see how we may begin to establish the real and lasting brotherhood of Men.” A few dogged, defiant natures will say, “Oh, let the Colonies alone: let them do as they like; and do what they think will be the best for themselves.” Ah, but so often when men cut themselves off from other men and think they are going to do the best for themselves, it turns out that they do the very worst for themselves. And that is just what my friend wishes to prevent.

VI.

THE GREATEST SCIENCE.

THERE is one science which, I humbly think, is better worth learning by men in general than all other sciences put together.

You will find no mention of it in any "Circle of the Sciences." You will discover no philosophical disquisition upon it in any of our great encyclopædias. You will find no learned treatise upon it, under any letter of the alphabet, in any lexicon or dictionary.

Many an antiquary who would write you a recondite tract, or a critical folio volume, on Stonehenge, or the Keltic Druids, or the Etruscans, or the Phœnicians, or Plato's Atlantis, has been as ignorant of this science as a child. Many an LL.D. or F.R.S., who could tell you the Latin name of every insect and every zoophyte, of every beetle and every spider, of every moth and every butterfly, of every sea-shell and every sea-weed, and every small petrification ; of every moss, and every lichen, and every fungus, has often been a mere ignoramus in this science.

Men who have known a score of languages, and were deep in all the profound mysteries of grammar

have often known far less of this science than the peasant who has never learned a letter of the alphabet, and whose hand has become as hard as horn with wielding the flail or grasping the stils of the plough.

It is a science which depends on no knowledge of letters or books, on no learned instruction or training by Masters of Arts or Doctors of Divinity. You cannot win a diploma by studying it at any college or university. It is a science which every man must study for himself, and in which he must be his own instructor.

It is a science which requires intuitive sagacity, unremitting and watchful and acute observation, and the keenest, yet the calmest, clearest, and most candid, judgment. It is a science which we can all be learning every day if we will, for the materials for learning it are within us and around us on every side as we walk through the path of life ; and yet it is so difficult to attain a perfect knowledge of this science that we know of but two Englishmen who became perfect scholars in it : the immortal bard of Stratford-on-Avon and the inspired tinker of Bedford Gaol—Shakspeare and John Bunyan.

I mean the Science of Human Nature : the Knowledge of the Human Heart. And I repeat, that this science is better worth learning, by men in general, than all other sciences put together—for, without it, a man becomes the easy dupe of every

knave and the victim of every trickster. He stumbles along the path of life, making every kind of mistake and every kind of blunder—and, even at fourscore, men will call him a greenhorn, although his head be grey, and his limbs totter for feebleness !

It is a truth, and a surprising truth, that there are not only so few profound scholars in this science, but so few earnest students in it. Thousands of our fellow-mortals go from Dan to Beer-sheba and find all barren as it regards the study of human character. They perform the whole pilgrimage of life without ever getting any real knowledge of human nature, either by studying the movements of their own hearts or observing the conduct of others. In other people they can see nothing that they deem worth studying ; and as for what is called introspection, or looking within, they think they have no need of that, they are so near perfection themselves.

There are others who do busy themselves greatly in observing the conduct and judging the character of their fellow-creatures. But some of these never look at anybody full in the face and fairly ; they only peer at people sideways, through the smoked glass of prejudice and envy, and so they see nothing but deformity and defects even in the fairest and noblest characters. Others are industrious students of human nature in a certain sense—but it is a very mischievous one. They want to know all about people's income, and how they spend it, and what

they eat and what they drink, and how they behave to their servants, and what blots there are in the history of their families, and who are their cousins, and uncles, and aunts, and what expectations they have from them, or from their grandfathers and grandmothers, if they happen to have such relatives. These are the people who are called "meddlers" in society, and they are often very troublesome to their neighbours.

I knew a man, in my youth, an elderly man, who was a great observer of human nature. I will not say of him, as it was said of Oliver Cromwell, that he could look through a man's skin right to his backbone—but he had a most shrewd knowledge of mankind. A young man used to converse with him, occasionally, on this very theme of human character; and, one day, after a long conversation upon it, the young man said, "Ah! well; there are all sorts of people in the world." "Nay," said the elder man, "there is one sort wanting." "What sort is that?" asked the young man eagerly. "The people," replied the elder man, "who mind their own business, and let other people's business alone."

He was right. They are otherwise entirely wanting—the people who mind their own business and let other people's business alone—or they are so scarce in the world that you would hardly be likely to find them if you performed a journey on purpose to look for them.

I am convinced of the scarcity of another kind of people—I mean the people without pride. I never found a man without pride yet ; and—I beg pardon of the ladies ! but—I must say, nor a woman either. Oh ! if pride found its way into the bosom of the first archangel in heaven, who can wonder that it is found universally in our fallen human nature ? It is the primal sin. It was the first human sin. It is the parent of all other sins ; and, I fear, we shall never find a human being without it.

You may see it in the lowliest and you may see it in the loftiest. Look at that little, dirty, shoeless, ragged lad ! He has a broken black pipe in his mouth. His father smokes, and his father is a man ; so the little, dirty, shoeless, ragged lad is aping manliness, forsooth ! See that little, mean-clad servant girl ! Somebody has given her sixpence, and she has spent it in a paltry artificial flower ; for she learns that ladies wear artificial flowers, and she wants to be a lady. Such instances of pride, and many others, are harmless compared with the pride of the man who spends thousands upon his house and grounds and furniture—upon his horses and dogs—upon his wines and grand dinners to his fashionable friends—and who hardens his heart against the poor, and will not give the slightest relief to the houseless and the miserable, to the fatherless and the widow.

To attempt an analysis of the different kinds of

pride would be a mighty task—the pride of intellectual men, for instance ; pride of exact knowledge of some one science ; pride of multifarious knowledge ; pride of quickness of perception ; pride of logical power ; pride of rapid powers of survey and calculation ; pride of strong common-sense, an ounce of which, Dean Swift said, was worth all the fine sense in the world. One kind of pride may be said to be peculiar to intellectual men, yet not to men of really high intelligence—the pride of thinking differently from other people, the pride of regarding yourself as a person who does not think with the common herd of mankind, and of believing yourself to be superior to ordinary people.

To a young intellectual man—one just beginning to have the consciousness of intellectual power, and to feel the thrilling pleasure of exercising it—how tempting it is to look upon himself as one who is above the vulgar crowd of human beings ! He begins soon to let you know that he no longer feels himself to be a child ; he has got out of leading-strings, and does not believe in old wives' fables, or the tales of infancy ; he wishes to let you know, most emphatically, that he thinks for himself.

“ Well, sir, and ought we not to think for ourselves ? ” asks some young man. Of course you ought to think for yourselves. The man who dare not think for himself is a coward, and the man who will not think for himself is a guilty idler, living a

life God never intended him to live, for God has made us all rational creatures, and He never intended us to live the life of mere animals. But, it should be the care of every young man who sets up for a thinker, and proclaims himself one, that he *does* think ; that he does not form opinions on important and weighty subjects by a hop, skip, and jump. It should be remembered that there are some subjects which are all-important : they have relation to our well-being here and our eternal happiness hereafter. The young may be led to form rash opinions on these subjects, which may cost them bitter pain when they get further on in life, and discover their mistake. Scores and hundreds of men, and some of them deeply sincere and earnest as well as intelligent men, have done this ; and warning should be taken by their experience.

One regrets to say that there is the greatest difficulty in enforcing this lesson, with a young man who has begun to take a pride in proclaiming that he thinks differently from other people. With the more intelligent sceptics among the working classes this is the master difficulty. They tell you, at once, that they do not conceive they ought to be influenced in their thinkings by any of the great men of the Past : they may reverence their intellect, but not their decisions. The pertness with which a young sceptic will look an old man in the face, who is thrice the age of the young freethinker—the con-

fidence with which he will tell the old man, who has read twice as many books as the other ever heard of, and gone through agonies of thought the other never dreamt of, that he knows more and judges more soundly about every subject than the man of threescore and ten, is marvellous. Yet it is a pertness that must be endured by the man of experience, if he would succeed in trying to induce the young man to *think again*, and endeavour to come to a lower estimate of his own wisdom.

That is a pungent anecdote of Sydney Smith, when he was visited by Macaulay just out of his teens. At parting, the old wit led the young egotist to the carriage, and, pushing him in, said, before he closed the door—"Just let me give you one word of advice—If anybody tries to persuade you that you are *not* the cleverest fellow in England—don't you believe 'em! God bless you! good-bye!"

And was Sydney Smith never guilty of egotism, when *he* was young?—tartly asks some admirer of Macaulay. Yea, doubtless; and lamented it, and groaned over it, a thousand times. For the wiser a man grows by experience, the more deeply he regrets past errors and follies. And the mortification and shame he feels while reflecting on his own foolishness, make him tender over the young, and earnest in directing them to a wiser course.

But how difficult it often is to impress the young fellows with a conviction that you are advising them

from sheer disinterestedness, or a real wish for their welfare. The roguish twinkle in their eye will often proclaim that they are setting the old fellow's preaching down to the credit of his conceit.

"We know we are young," they will say: "you are always reminding us of that. But it does not follow that, because we are young, we are foolish. You tell us of our want of experience; but it is not true that 'experience makes fools wise.' Your old saws, that you are quoting so frequently, are often worth nothing." And the lads are right. Experience never makes fools wise—but it always makes wise men wiser.

One does not want to see young men all becoming mere spoonies, and having nothing to say for themselves. One likes to see a little modesty in a youth—but not over much of it. If a young man dare not venture an opinion of his own, people will soon say, it is because he has not the brains to form one. A little self-reliance and self-assertion are undoubtedly necessary to give a young man a chance of making his way in the world. We do not desire to see young men *put down*, in conversation, or debate, because they are young. The great lesson to be learned by the young is that which we all should practise, more and more; introspection—as the learned call it: *looking within*.

If we would be true proficient in this, the Greatest Science, the culture of the habit of intro-

spection is the essential first part of it. We can only understand human nature in others, by studying it, first, in ourselves. It is solely by comparison that we learn to understand human nature in others. We have no rule by which to measure others, if we have not taken the 'gauge and dimensions' of ourselves—or striven honestly to do it. We cannot ascertain the worth and weight of another's character if we have never put ourselves into the scale of honest self-examination.

True it is, that we have often sudden impressions of character—impressions at first sight—usually unfavourable to the character of a person whom we meet for the first time. All observers of human nature have this kind of experience. And, what is most remarkable, we are liable to have this bad impression, of the bad character, of one who has been commended to us for his moral worth. "What a mistake my friend has made in telling me that there is so much that is good in this man—why, surely, the fellow is a rogue!" we suddenly think and say to ourselves. Perhaps when the interview is over—during which we have been very curt in our utterances—we begin to reflect, and to regret our curtness. "What must the man have thought of my unmannerly behaviour?" we ask ourselves: "I was scarcely civil to him. What right had I to treat him thus, after receiving such recommendations of him from my true and tried friend? How

foolishly superstitious it is to yield to these sudden impressions, as if one had some supernatural gift of reading the human heart ! ”

And then we determine that we will forcibly repress all our bad feeling, and show such perfect courtesy to the suspected ‘rogue,’ the next time we meet him, as shall completely efface from his mind any uneasiness or displeasure which our roughness may have caused him. And, perhaps, an intimacy follows—an intimacy that may be called friendship ; and it may last some time. But, the discovery comes at last—and comes bitterly—that our first impression regarding this man, as bad as it was, was the true one. The oldest and deepest students of human nature unite to assure us that such has been their experience, again and again.

How is this ? Does the soul of a man sometimes look so significantly through his eyes, and give such an unmistakable expression to his face, that a close observer cannot fail to read the living manuscript unerringly ? It must be so. The so-called sciences, imperfect as they may be, of Lavater and Gall are alike *founded* in truth. Thousands of facts you may gather from sculpture and painting, show that men always had a belief in something like what we call ‘Physiognomy’ and ‘Phrenology.’ And, we feel sure that Da Vinci has not erred in giving such a villainous face to Iscariot, in the immortal picture of The Last Supper : Judas must have looked like

the incarnate demon that the Saviour pronounced him to be, when he had fully yielded up his soul to the dominion of Sin. In like manner, we all feel sure, that, although the word 'phrenology' had never been uttered in the sixteenth century, none of us could have stood in the company of men wearing such heads on their shoulders as Bacon and Shakspeare, without the conscious awe that we were in the presence of high and commanding intelligences.

Nor, is it so mysterious, after all, that we should have these sudden impressions respecting the character of our fellow-creatures. We need not have recourse to the old doctrines of sympathy and antipathy—natural, spiritual, or magnetic—to account for it. Many a rogue may deceive a saint, by looking harmless *after a fashion* ; but that fashion will be seen through by the man who hath his eyes open : the man who knows that—

“One may smile and smile—and be a villain.”

The seeming harmless look of the rogue cannot deceive that man.

Yet, your very shrewd, very suspicious student of human nature is not to be admired : he who has become so embittered by the faithlessness of others, and the suffering it has caused him, that he openly avows—“Sir, I make it a rule to take every man for a rogue, until I prove that he is honest.” Such a student of human nature is not to be admired, for

he must cause himself daily misery. There can be no happiness for such a man. He must live like a traveller whose path lies through a dim wood, where, he believes, thieves or murderers may be lurking for him on every side, and so he must keep a sharp look-out at every step, lest they pounce upon him. There can be no rest for such a man, except when he reaches his night's lodging, locks himself up in his bedroom—after carefully looking under the bed and into the clothes-closet—snuffs out his candle,—and then rolls himself up in the sheets and blankets, sighing, “Thank God, the rogues can neither see me, nor get at me, now !”

We cannot afford to live every day and hour in this world with a perpetual look-out for roguery. Neither queens nor beggars pass their lives here, with a consummation of happiness at command ; and we are foolish indeed if we mar the little share of happiness that we have by cultivating the habit of always suspecting evil in those around us. Let us enjoy all the good which God sends us ; and, above all, the goodness of our fellow-creatures : the goodness they display by acts of kindness, and looks of sympathy, and words of cheerfulness and affection—in brief, all the goodness which *appears* in them, and which we have cause to believe is not mere appearance.

“ But, my dear sir, you cannot believe everybody—you cannot trust everybody.” Of course, we cannot. And so we must fall back on the old

lesson : we must be students of human nature ; and we must begin by *looking within*. That will give us more unerring skill in measuring the characters of others, than we can possibly derive from sudden and mysterious impressions. While, on the other hand, it will take away the sharp eye of suspicion in us, and render our judgments less harsh. For, we shall scarcely be human if we do not learn to judge all men with increasing mildness and tenderness, the more we discern our own weakness and imperfections. An intolerant and censorious old man cannot be a good man. He can never have practised honest self-examination ; or he would have seen so much of his own folly as to render him tolerant with others. Nor can he be a wise man ; or he would know that people set down his censoriousness to his own familiarity with sin. They say, he is so quick in spying out other people's knavery because he is so deeply steeped and practised in it himself.

VII.

WHAT IS 'OLD AGE'?

SOME people may think that I am starting a very frivolous and foolish inquiry ; but I assure them that I am putting what I more and more feel to be a very serious question. It is true that my perplexity is caused by the men of science—who are perplexing everybody with one assertion or another—but my perplexity is none the less for all that.

The men of science all tell us (with the exception of one surgical authority, who says that the enamel of our teeth lasts many years), that the matter of our bodies is perpetually changing—so that in seven or eight, or in ten years, at most—we have not a particle of the body left that we had so many years ago. *Ergo*, since I, for one, have not a material particle left in *my* body, that I had ten years ago, my body must be a *young* body, though I am now four-score years old ; in other words, I am an old man. So, then, I am an old man with a young body !

A *young* body ? How can that be, seeing I have only few teeth left, and the few that I have are not worth having ? How can that be, since my hair is

nearly all grey? How can that be, seeing that my eyesight is becoming very imperfect for objects which are near; I cannot see to write or read without spectacles or an eye-glass, although I can see far-off objects as plainly and clearly as ever? And my digestive powers will only assimilate certain kinds of food to my general system. And the action of the heart is so soon disturbed, as to render me very uneasy, if I forget myself, and set off to walk at the same pace as I used to walk when a youth, or attempt to jump over a hedge when an orchid or some scarce flower tempts me, or yield to emotion, and preach or lecture with excitement. And my knees fail me if I climb, but much more when I descend stairs or a hill. And I begin to feel a pitiful weariness all over me after a little unusual exertion—so that I am inclined to cry out with Hamlet's friend, when he heard the ghost speak under his feet, "Oh, day and night! but this is wondrous strange!" For the men of science assure me that this body of mine is a *young* body, since I have not had any particle of it more than ten years!

And, now, about the powers of the mind. My memory is strangely treacherous in the record of daily acts and occurrences. If I did not keep a list of the names of the persons to whom I write, day by day, I should be writing to them again, as if I had not written before. Nor can I call up the names of persons whom I have seen of late without great

difficulty, very often. Nay, of late, I am often unable to call up familiar names in history ; and this strange incapacity has begun to beset me, occasionally, while lecturing, and so I am obliged to describe the historical person or place by what, in rhetoric, they call a periphrasis. And, what frets me still more, in winter time, when I am not daily flower-gathering, I lose the name of a flower, and cannot remember it for hours after the friend has gone away, with whom I wanted to talk about it.

All this is more mortifying than I can express to one who used to remember everything at one time of day, and used to wonder how others did to forget anything. And all this is the more strange, because my memory of childhood and youth is still so vivid. I can call up before the eye of my mind the faces of my old playmates and companions, and tell all their names, without a moment's hesitation ; and I can recall scenes, occurrences, or experiences of early life and passages of books I read early, as vividly as ever, though I cannot always remember in what book I read some things which are very remarkable, or from whose conversation I learned them. I think my perception, judgment, reason, are as clear and vigorous as they ever were—but those who know me are the best judges of that.

Now, the men of science—woe worth 'em !—want to perplex me still more by getting me to believe that my material brain (which, they assure me, is

four-fifths water, and the other fifth so much fat, albumen, acids, and salts, and a little phosphorus) thinks, judges, reasons, wills, remembers, perceives, and is the seat of consciousness. But, if it be so, how comes my memory to be so defective, seeing my brain is so young—seeing that I have only had the particles of matter that compose it so very few years? I should like to learn what answer the said “men of science” can give to that query.

But the more important query I would put to them is this: How is it, if the brain remembers, that I remember so perfectly the names of persons and places, and the facts, familiar to me, some fifty and some sixty years ago—and yet the particles of the brain I had then, ceased soon after, to be a part of my brain? Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, although reckoned to be a very strong-minded man, had a theory of memory which seems disproved altogether by our experience. He likens the memory to the waves formed in a pond when you throw a stone into it; the circles becoming fainter as they recede from the point where the stone fell into the water; and so, he says, our memory of facts becomes weaker the more we advance in age and recede from the time when we first learned the facts. This is, certainly, a mistake of the stout sceptic, so far as my own experience is concerned. I wonder what he would have said if one could have had a few words of talk with him, and he is one of the

sturdy old fellows I should like to have seen and talked with vastly.

My own conviction is strong and clear, that the old records of memory are *not* kept by the brain, but by that spiritual essence—that mysterious something—which constitutes my real self. And so it is *not* wonderful to me that I have such vivid remembrances of what occurred, and what I experienced, when I was young ; the wonder to me is, that the new particles of my brain which are now forming do not constitute as perfect an instrument for the mind, my real self, to use, as the particles of the brain did when I was younger. My wonder is as great about the new particles of the brain, as about the new particles which are now forming the other parts of my body.

“ But, have the men of science no theory wherewith to answer your queries and dissipate your perplexities ? ” some one may ask. They have a theory, but it does *not* lessen my perplexity.

In their philosophical jargon they say that a *new* “ law ” sets in when we reach the age of forty, or, in some cases, not long after. Thus, the action of the arteries—or what we call the pulse—ceases to be regular, and the blood no longer forms exactly the same substance as in earlier life ; our bones are less and less worth the name of bones as we become aged, for they come to consist of earth more than of real bone ; and so the bones of the aged are brittle and

soon broken ; and several parts of our bodies take a more rigid form, or have a tendency to ossify ; even the bronchial tubes take this rigid form, a surgeon tells me, and that is the reason why *bronchitis* is often so speedily fatal to aged people.

I repeat, this theory of the men of science does not lessen my perplexity, for it is no answer to my real difficulty. It does not give me the why or wherefore that I seek. Since the kind of food we eat is about the same, and the constituents of the air we breathe are the same, why, I ask, does not the blood furnish as good material for the formation of bone *now* as it did when I was thirty or forty years younger—and why does it *now* form so much earth ? Why are so many parts of the body rigid that used to be so flexible ? Why do the eyes fail that used to be so powerful ?

Plain folk who know nothing about science will say to me—"My dear fellow, be content ! You are growing old, and your body is wearing out. Why should you marvel at the decay of nature ? Your experience is what we must all experience as we grow old. It is common to man, and common to all the animals, doubtless."

My dear plain folk, I answer, I am as willing to be content as you are—only *it is not a fact* that my body is wearing out, or that what I experience is a decay of nature. How can my body, or yours, be "wearing out," while they are being perpetually

renewed? How can there be any "decay of nature" in bodies which are perpetually receiving new particles of matter and losing the old? You cannot doubt that we are undergoing this perpetual change, for we are compelled to supply the loss of the older particles of our bodies by eating and drinking, and breathing the oxygen of the air, in order to form new blood. And we cannot arrest this change we are undergoing by changing our food. If we could live on nectar and ambrosia—suppose we knew where to get 'em—our blood, now we are old, would still form earthy matter instead of bone, and so on, perversely.

The answer is *not* furnished by the men of science, with their gibberish about "law." They know nothing about such a *law*. It is the word they are ever using to hide their ignorance, and to juggle us into the belief that they are wondrously knowing. It is high time that every man of common-sense treated the word with derision, when it is used as the men of science so often use it.

We know nothing about any *law* in the case; we only know that the change in our bodies is a *fact*. Why such a change should be experienced by human creatures at the age of forty or thereabouts, and why it should not occur at four hundred years instead, we do not know, nor can the men of science tell us. And why a dog should be old at a dozen years, and a horse at twenty—or why the eagle, the

raven, and the swan, with the tortoise, and some other creatures, should live to one hundred years, nobody can tell us. They are simply *facts*; we know nothing about any *law* making it so. "It is the will of the Maker," would be the allegement of a plain Christian man; but the men of science reject that sort of thinking. They must conjure up a *law* for everything, although they do not believe in a *law-maker*. But how can a law make itself, or how can blind, unintelligent, unconscious force make a law?

VIII.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE STATE, VIEWED AS A PROBABILITY.

THERE is no point in which modern Sceptics seem more fully agreed and more positive, than that there is no future state—no life for Man after the present life. The people who call themselves Agnostics—that is to say, Know-nothings, are at one with the Atheists, on this point : they say they know nothing about a Future State. They can see no proof of it. They cannot see why Man should be likely to live again, any more than other animals. And they think the most sensible people in the world are those who give themselves the least trouble about it,—who make themselves as happy as they can in the present life, and do not expect to live again after death. Thus Mr. Frederick Harrison, and others, admire the feeling of Harriet Martineau, who said she felt so much calm satisfaction in the belief that she would cease to live—cease to exist consciously—after death.

1. But this is a very uncommon feeling. So much

so, that we can scarcely help feeling startled on hearing that any one—and, especially any highly-intelligent person, like Miss Martineau—professes to have such a belief or conviction, and to be so perfectly happy with it.

One has heard people of little thought, who professed to be sceptical, say, in a light and careless manner, “ Oh, I see nothing so alarming in what you call annihilation : it is only like going to sleep, and never waking. I see nothing alarming in it.” But really thoughtful people do not talk in that manner. The desire to live again, after death, is so general among us, that we expect to hear almost everybody agree in the thought. Annihilation—for ever ceasing to be conscious—seems to us so appalling that we usually shudder at the conception. I must confess this is my own feeling. If there be no existence for me after the present life, it seems to me that I might as well never have lived at all. I love life. I am thankful for it. To me simple existence, without pain, is happiness. But I am happy, not only because my present life is enjoyable, but because I expect a continuance of existence, after what we call death. If you tell me that I am to live no more after this life, then, it seems that you take up the greatest stone to throw at me, that you can find. For it will destroy my happiness. I shall not be thankful another hour for life, if you assure me that I am to die like a dog, and never more be conscious.

I should, thenceforth, have to wear in my heart the cancer of despair; and it would render me perpetually miserable.

This desire to live again—to possess continued existence after death—is so common, that we have all long been accustomed to talk of it, as natural. Such was the prevailing custom before Modern Scepticism began to spread its doctrines. And, whatever Modern Sceptics may say, the desire, hope, and wish to live again, after death, being so widely spread, seems to afford some ground for our belief in the doctrine of a Future State. At any rate, I think we may call this the First Reason for such belief on the side of Probability.

2. But, Secondly, as Bishop Butler reasons, ‘because we know not at all what death is in itself,’ we cannot reason that it is the cessation of our existence. An objector may say—“But we know that death is unconsciousness.” Well, and so is sound sleep; and it is the same when we swoon. We have not ceased to exist, in either case, for we revive into consciousness. And why may it not be so with death?

‘Oh, but the case is very different,’ says the objector: ‘in death, the body decays and finally disappears.’ But is the body myself or yourself? If the body disappears, is that a proof that I cease to exist, or that you cease to exist? Our bodies have changed several times during our lives. The body I

had when an infant is no longer mine ; and where the material particles are which composed it, I know not : perhaps existing in vegetable or animal forms, in the different quarters of the globe. The body I had when a boy—when a youth—when I was thirty,—forty—fifty—sixty—seventy years of age—they are no longer attached to me : flesh and blood, and brains, and bones—they are all gone ;—but *I* remain. *I* am conscious that I have existed all this time, notwithstanding all the changes.

Lord Brougham considered this to be an unanswerable proof that the soul continues to exist after death. Having existed in spite of its separation from several bodies, successively, he could not see, any more than Bishop Butler, why it should not continue to exist ununited to any body, or, perhaps, to some new body—some new and subtile form of matter.

3. But, Thirdly, ‘ God is a Spirit ’—that is to say, He is Mind : Immortal Mind. And so we hardly expect Mind to be destroyed. Not that we are naturally immortal, because God is. ‘ Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, or can see ’—says the Apostle Paul to Timothy. “ Who only hath immortality ”—that is to say, natural immortality. *We* have no natural immortality. If we had, we should be independent of our Maker. But, neither we, nor any other order of created beings,

are independent in their existence. God supports us every moment, or we should cease to exist. The highest Archangel could not exist one moment, if God did not keep him in existence. No more could a grain of sand.

Now, although *we* cannot annihilate one single particle of matter : we can only change its form, or its state, or its condition : yet we never doubt that God can annihilate matter : we see no reason to doubt it. No material substance seems to us to be of such a peculiar nature, or value, that God could never will to destroy it. But, as I said before, we hardly expect Him to annihilate mind, or spirit. For He Himself is mind, or spirit ; and we hardly think He will annihilate that which resembles His own nature. I think we may venture to call this our Third Probability for expecting a Future State.

4. But, Fourthly, God endows Mind, or Spirit, with such attributes as to render it, in our conception, of such a lofty nature, compared with matter, that we can hardly think He would create a soul with the intent to annihilate it.

Let the first seeds of knowledge be sown in the mind—let it once begin to have a thirst for knowledge, and how quickly the desire grows, and the struggle strengthens to know more. Think of the eagerness with which students fasten on the quest for languages, or the sciences. And remember the fact—so strongly proven in the lives of Humboldt

and others—that the more a man knows, the more he desires to know. Once formed, you cannot satisfy man's passion for knowledge : we desire to know even God Himself.

All this seems to indicate, very plainly, that we are not born simply for this world—born to get a little stunted knowledge here, and then perish utterly. No : I think we may safely set down Man's unquenchable thirst for knowledge as a Fourth Reason on the side of Probability for our belief in a Future State.

5. But Fifthly. We treated our First Reason—the simple wish to live again—too simply. We must remember that our wish to live again after death is not simply a dread of annihilation—a desire for continuous life merely. It is a wish for a happy life : a wish to be happy for ever. Now, we cannot suppose that our Maker has implanted such a desire within us, solely to mock us—to fill us with blank disappointment. And just so it is with the passion for knowledge that we were just now speaking of. We cannot think our Maker would so construct our natures as to mock us. The unquenchable desire for knowledge, and the ever-present desire for happiness, which are so natural to Man, must indicate, we think, that He Who made us intends to gratify us.

6. But Sixthly. There is a widely-prevailing mistake among writers who call themselves Free-thinkers. They assert that it is well-nigh an invari-

able fact, that as the body is so is the mind. While we wear the body of a child, we possess only childish intelligence: as we advance to manhood our intelligence increases and strengthens; and, as age comes on, decline of intellect accompanies debility of body; and, as we sink into the decrepitude of age, we usually sink into vacancy of mind, and forgetfulness of all things.

But this is not true. So far from our mental condition being equal when we are children, it is very unequal. How bright some children are compared with others! And if all children were properly attended to, the bright children would well repay the expense of their culture; and the world would soon be much fuller of intellectual and moral benefactors of the race than it is. If their parents, and those who had the care of them, had not perceived the precocious genius of the young Milton, and Bacon, and Newton, and Pascal, and Mozart, we might have lost some of their precious gifts to the world; and many a child of the poor might make a figure in the world and be a blessing to it, if his parents had the means to afford him due culture.

And, then, it is not a fact that from the age when Man reaches his bodily prime—that is to say, from forty to fifty, as his material frame begins to decline, so his mind loses its powers, and he gradually sinks into imbecility. The memory of many men is strong, even at fourscore, while the reflective powers

are stronger than ever they were. The judgment of a man of sixty, in almost any case of practical business, or serious and weighty concern, is sounder than ever it was when he was younger ; and men value it more : nay, it is often so at seventy, and sometimes at fourscore.

7. But, Seventhly, there is one fact so strongly attesting our spiritual nature, and, therefore, rendering our Future State of Existence the more probable, that I often wonder more is not thought and said about it. I mean, not only the retention in our memories of the facts of childhood, boyhood, youth, early manhood, and mature life, even to old age ;—but the sudden, the instantaneous way in which some fact of childhood, or youth—or say, of thirty or forty years ago—will flit across the mind—nay, stand before our mental vision as vividly as if it had happened but yesterday.

You have, all, experience of this kind. When I have these visitations, I stand still, and ask myself—‘How came this to my consciousness?’ Your philosophers would be ready to reply—‘No doubt by association of ideas.’ But I so often can trace no such association that I very strongly opine the grand phrase—‘The Law of Association of Ideas’—is only a phrase invented to conceal ignorance.

Perhaps, I suddenly see Thomas Miller’s face, and hear him say words he uttered to me in play, in Sailors’ Alley, at old Gainsborough. I can trace no

cause for such a sudden remembrance, yet there we were together on that spot, and the face is the same, and the voice is the same—and yet it is now more than seventy years ago since we were at play, in that alley! Now, my body—flesh and bones and blood and brain—having changed I know not how many times within eighty years,—how can I doubt that there must be some spiritual principle of God's creation, somehow connected permanently with this body while it lives in its present state,—which is, mysteriously, the unfailing depositary of the memory of our life-passages, whatever they may be? Will it be, as Coleridge thought it would be, that when we put off the body—this frail tabernacle—the soul will be able to trace all her past history, from the first moment of her existence?

Oh, who can doggedly set it down that the spiritual something which not only exists through all the changes of the body, but registers and keeps the memory of its acts and words and thoughts for scores of years,—as fresh as if they were but things of yesterday ;—which takes note of all Nature, and measures and gauges all things,—nay, aspires to know what the infinite I AM is Himself, shall cease to be? Does it seem likely that God so deals with His highest work—(for it is His highest work, to make a soul higher than the forming of suns and planets)—as to cease to support its existence?—to annihilate it?

8. The rewards for good and punishments for evil doing, in this life, are often uncertain, and are often, as we think, not proportionate to what is deserved : so we seem, naturally, to expect the due fulfilment hereafter—or, otherwise, the government of God would not, we think, be one of rectitude.

9. Remorse for crime argues that all is not ended here. If Man have not a natural conscience, as Butler argues ; if his judgment of right and wrong depends on the training of his understanding and reason ; yet the poignancy of conviction for sin—the impossibility of ‘killing conscience’—in many criminals, is so great, that if they be not under the power of conscience, it seems very much like it. The hardness with which some few criminals suffer shows the intense power of the Will developed in some men : it may not result from the absence of conscience, but from the ascendancy of the will over conscience in such particular men.

10. The Utility of a Future Life, and of our full belief in it, for our good conduct and happiness here, strengthens the presumption that a belief in a Future Life is not a mere conceit.

So much on the side of mere Probability. Christianity gives us Certainty : for Christ brought Life and Immortality to light.

IX.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF RETRIBUTION, HERE AND HEREAFTER.

[*A Discourse delivered chiefly to the Working Classes in various
parts of England.*]

“Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for, whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For, he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”
—GALATIANS vi. 7, 8.

RETRIBUTION is the doctrine maintained by St. Paul in this text: retribution—a doctrine you will find maintained by all religions that have ever existed, and contained in all religious literatures which have ever been written—notwithstanding the denial of this doctrine, by some bold people, in our day.

“Retribution, sir,” says some plain man: “it is a hard-sounding word: what does it mean?”

Retribution means due punishment for wrong-doing—just punishment for wrong-doing—sure and certain punishment for wrong-doing—unescapable punishment for wrong-doing—punishment which God

has irrevocably affixed to wrong-doing, and which is sure to overtake the wrong-doer, some way or other, sooner or later.

"I don't believe in the truth of such a sweeping doctrine, sir," says some objector. "Talk to me about retribution and the sure and certain punishment of wrong-doers! Don't we see wrong-doers go unpunished every day? Do not men lie and swindle and cheat, every day, and get money, and rise in the world? Do not rich men grind the faces of the poor, and ride in chariots, and live in splendour; and when they die have pompous funerals, and fine paragraphs to their praise in the newspapers? Pooh, pooh, sir! Don't talk to us about what you call 'retribution.' In this world vice triumphs and villainy bears the bell."

Very true, my friend! What you say is too true. But you have not disproved the truth of the great doctrine of Retribution, for all that. You are only leading us back to the old, old problem which has puzzled our race for five thousand years. They discussed it in Hieroglyphic Egypt, in old Sanscrit India, in ancient, mysterious China; and that it was the subject of controversy among the ancient Hebrews, the Book of Job attests powerfully. Lord Byron calls the Book of Job the 'oldest drama and the grandest poetry in the world.' And, in that 'oldest drama' the great subject of dispute is this same doctrine of Retribution. Job, or Ayoub, is an

Eastern Emir, or noble, who has lost all his riches, and has been smitten with a fell disease—tells the Poet—through the agency of a great malignant spirit—Satan, or Shatán—and he sits on the ground trying to relieve the irritation of his skin, with a piece of broken pottery. And he bursts into that speech of sublime despair which reminds us so much of the distracted King Lear in Shakspeare.

“Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived.

“Let that day be darkness. Let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it.

“Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it. Let a cloud dwell upon it. Let the blackness of the day terrify it.

“As for that night, let darkness seize upon it. Let it not be joined to the days of the year: let it not come into the number of the months.

“Lo! let that night be solitary! let no joyful voice come therein!”

And so he continues in what we must call a strain of sublime misery. And his three especial friends come to mourn with him, and to comfort him: Eliphaz the Temanite, and Zophar the Naamathite, and Bildad the Shuhite. You have all heard of ‘Job’s comforters’!

“Ay, ay,” say you; “we have met with too many of the race, in life’s journey.”

And when these so-called comforters come to Job, and listen to his speeches, instead of comforting him, they profess to be shocked and indignant, because he declares that he knows not why God has inflicted so much punishment upon him. He will not rebel against God—but he cannot understand why he is made to endure so much affliction. They argue that instead of complaining, he ought to acknowledge that he deserves all his suffering ; and that there must be some secret sin which he ought to confess, and which is the chief cause of his dread affliction. “Doubtless, ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you !” says Job, and declares that he has no secret sin to confess. His friends renew their attack in a similar strain, and insist upon it that there is some great guilt which he has concealed. He has either oppressed the poor, or done some great wrong ; and he is, therefore, deservedly punished. “Miserable comforters are ye all !” says Job ; and he tells them he shall not play the hypocrite by pleading guilty of sins which he has not committed. He has not oppressed the poor ; but it has been his delight to relieve and befriend them. And he bursts out into that beautiful language which Handel has set to such beautiful music,—

“When the ear heard me, then it blessed me ;
and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me :

“Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the
fatherless, and him that had none to help him.

“The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy.”

In the close of the book the grand dramatist represents the Almighty as speaking out of the whirlwind, and confounding Job’s comforters. And God teaches Job that he should not question Divine Government, and He restores Job’s riches—but He does not solve the problem of retribution for Job.

In the 73rd Psalm we have Asaph taking up the problem. He tells us that his feet had well-nigh slipped, when he saw the prosperity of the wicked. They are not in trouble as other men, says Asaph : their eyes stand out with fatness : they have more than heart can wish. But, as to God’s people, he declares that waters of a full cup are wrung out to them ; and he thinks he has cleansed his heart in vain, and washed his hands in innocency. The puzzle is too great for the mind of Asaph : the problem was so mysterious, he says, that it was too painful for him. ‘Until,’ says he, ‘I went into the sanctuary of God,’ ‘then,’ he says, ‘he understood their end’: that is to say, he entered into *deep reverential reflection*.—And that is the only process by which we shall be able to cope with this problem of Retribution, so as to satisfy ourselves of its truth. We can never come to right conclusions on profound questions, by rash and hasty judgments. Let us imitate Asaph.

I shall never forget the behaviour of a Jew Atheist in London, twenty-eight years ago, when I was in the habit of holding discussions with Sceptics in the Hall of Science, City Road. I had just been quoting the words—"I am a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation"—and he burst out in anger, "I hate such a God. I won't worship your Jehovah. He is as bad as Moloch!" "But," I said, "you know He is the God of your fathers." "I know that," he said, "but I won't have a God Who, they say, commits such an injustice as to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation."

"Now," said I, "will you just calmly reflect for a moment that if you could banish God out of existence, you have not banished that fact out of existence, that the sins of the fathers *are* visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation? Look at the undeniable facts, that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children, often to the third and fourth generation, in the transmission of disease—in the form of bad habits and practices—in poverty and want. And, again," I said to the Jew, "remember that all this demonstrates real benevolence in God. He determines that men shall understand that sin is sinful; and therefore He surrounds man with judgments which are most likely to deter man from sinning. God not only affixes

physical pain to the performance of sin, and ruin of circumstances, and other penalties ; but He lets the penalties fall on their children, that parental feeling may be called into action as a preventive to sin. And we all know that a man can often be deterred from acting wrongly, when he remembers it would bring punishment on his children. Nay, we know that such a consideration will deter him when nothing else will."

Let every one who wishes to come to a fair and true reckoning on the doctrine of Retribution remember this : that God is the Moral Governor of the whole Human Race. He knows that, as Moral Agents, we influence one another. We may venture to say that in most of the sins men commit they injure others as well as themselves. Whole families are often ruined by the evil example of parents. Even in a shop of working-men, how often the bold wickedness of one or two men will ruin a whole company, though it consist of many scores. And it is the same with higher society. See when there is a wicked Court—like that of George the Fourth—how open wickedness spreads among the nobility.

Now God, as the All-Wise One, knows all the complications of sin, and how it spreads among many and is not confined to one. And so He sends the due retribution sometimes on a family—sometimes on a tribe—or even on a nation. "The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full"—you

remember, is a Scriptural expression. God lets sin accumulate, lets it ripen and come to a head, and then the punishment falls and overwhelms all who are in any way involved in the sin. The Bible gives us signal instances of this kind, and we have it even in modern history : in the history of the Bourbons of France, and of our own Stuarts.

Again, let all who wish to come to a fair and true reckoning on the doctrine of Retribution, take note how observable and clear it is that there is no corrupt favouritism with God. If His own people do wrong He does not exempt them from retribution. Mark how Jacob suffered for his meanness and deceit ; he sowed deceit and he reaped deceit. After his trickery to his brother Esau, mark how he was tricked again and again, by Laban ; and remember how he had to crouch and bow and tremble before Esau, when he had to meet him, so many years after their separation. And again think how he was punished for his sin, in the sorrow he had for his son Joseph. Oh, no! God does not except His own children from the great law of Retribution. Think of David, and the rebellion of his son Absalom, and the bad conduct of some of his other children. His great black sin in the matter of Uriah was forgiven ; but he had to 'sup sorrow for it' (to use an old English phrase) ; he had to undergo retribution to the end of his life.

The instances of retribution in the Bible are

numerous ; but have we not witnessed them in our own day—Napoleon the Great and Napoleon the Little ?

“ Well, sir,” says another objector, “ I have listened to you very attentively ; but I must tell you I think you have only made out a sort of faulty case ; you have not established the fact that there is a sure and certain law of Retribution, either for nations, families, or individuals. You know well enough that there are cases in history which are against you, and so there are of families, and so there are of individuals. We do not see Retribution always : quite the contrary, only sometimes, as everybody knows.

“ Now, if, in every case, Retribution were as clear and evident, as it is in the case of the First Napoleon, we could not doubt your doctrine. After shedding—or causing to be shed—the blood of perhaps one million of human beings, he lives six years at St. Helena, tortured with that most shuddering of tortures—cancer of the stomach. But, to this is added the million-fold cancer of the soul—Remorse ! How complete a realisation it seems of the fable of old Æschylus : Jupiter condemning Prometheus to be chained to a rock in Caucasus, and to have a vulture perpetually gnawing his liver—the vulture of Remorse !

“ But, you know, you cannot make the proof of your doctrine rest on the tortures of Napoleon. We see some good people pass very comfortably through

life, while others meet with very vile usage. And we see some rascals justly punished; but we fear the greater number of them not only escape punishment, but they prosper and triumph.

“Nay, there is one great historical fact you seem to have forgotten altogether. Wrong increases in a family for generations, and they riot in it—when suddenly, the family come to nought, and one poor, comparatively unoffending member bears all the disgrace the family have merited, and he only suffers, while those who lived before him escaped punishment altogether, and rioted in wrong to the end of their existence——”

Stay, stay, my friend, you are forgetting that, hitherto, we have only been dealing with the question of Retribution *here*: we have now to deal with Retribution *hereafter*.”

“You may save yourself the trouble of entering on that subject,” interjects some sceptical hearer: “I don’t believe in, or expect, any *hereafter*.”

Then why do you take any interest in the question of Retribution? Of what real consequence can it be to you? Paul thought the doctrine of great consequence, or he would not have given us these warning words—“Be not deceived: God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.” And the words that come after show that Paul meant not only reaping *here*—but reaping *hereafter*. Do not conclude, then, without a

little more thinking that all the royal forerunners, for instance, of the poor unfortunate Louis XVI. of France, escaped the punishment due to their wrongdoing, although some of them lived in such royal riot here. I must leave you who say you expect no hereafter to think more about it, and attend now, to St. Paul's words: "He that soweth to his own flesh"—what is that? He that follows the bent of his own fallen nature.

For our natures are fallen. We feel they are. Our natural inclination is not to self-denial, but to indulgence. We show it from childhood. Our natural inclination is not to humility, but to pride. We show it from childhood, I repeat. And we show it all along through life. How soon an unregenerate man is offended! "You insult me, sir!" says he; and his eyes flash and his cheeks redden, and he is very much inclined to strike. Our natural inclination is not to the 'charity that thinketh no evil,' but to the disposition that easily believes evil of anybody. For nothing delights the unregenerate mind so much as the hearing of a bit of good rotten scandal; and the more rotten it is, and the more it smells, the more acceptable it is.

But, if you would see a more full and awful account of fallen human nature, listen to the black catalogue of sins which St. Paul presents to the Gentiles, in the close of the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans—and remember the catalogue

is true of all Gentiles, of ourselves among them. I shall not read it all to you: only the last five verses: "And, as they did not like," etc., etc.

"But, sir, do you mean to say that we are all born with an equal propensity to evil, and to all these evils which Paul mentions?"

No: I do not. But we are each and all born with the propensity to evil, and some of us with a propensity to many evils: others, it may be, to fewer.

If any man doubts the dire Scriptural truth that we are born in sin—that the carnal mind is enmity against God—let him begin to seek religion, and he'll soon find that he is naturally prone to evil. So long as a man is living in sin—living a jolly life—taking his pipe and glass in the tap-room—or more respectably, his glass of brandy and water and his cigar, in the inn-parlour—he laughs at your Methodism and cant about being a sinner, and a fallen creature. But let the Spirit of God lay hold of him and lead him to seek religion, and he will soon begin to cry out with Paul, before he got out of his struggle with sin, and began to be holy—before he got out of the seventh chapter of Romans into the eighth, as an old preacher used to say—"When I would do good, evil is present with me! Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!"

"Well, now," another is saying, "what do you

really hold to be the truth about a Future State? What do you hold to be the real truth as it regards Future Punishment? "They that sow to their own flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption." St. Paul uses the old Greek word *φθορα*. The lexicons render it 'corruption,' 'decay,' 'destruction,' 'ruin.' Our old translators have chosen the first rendering. The Rev. Edward White, and some other scholars consider these expressions as literal, and judge that although all sinners will be punished for a season—for a term merited by their degree of sin—they will eventually be annihilated. I have said, over and over again, that I cannot receive such a doctrine.

Some of you, no doubt, have heard me say that the doctrine of Mr. Maurice and dear Charles Kingsley seems inviting. I acknowledge that there is something very winning and very attractive in the belief that God will eventually banish all pain and suffering, and all sin and evil out of His universe, and that happiness and holiness shall reign in it for ever—but the proof of this is not so clear to me. (1) I do not know, since God can permit, or endure, the existence of sin and suffering in His universe now, why He cannot endure it for ever. (2) And, if any one tells me that they cannot think there can be punishment for ever in the Future State, for sins we have committed in our short existence here: the punishment seems so disproportionate, that it seems unjust—I ask, how do you know what kind of

punishment and what amount of it sin deserves? I cannot reckon up what my sins deserve. I dare not take God's place and pronounce judgment—and remember, you must not.

“But we understand, sir, that the Greek words, *αιων* and *αιωνιος* do not mean ever and everlasting.” Just so: their literal meaning is *age* and *age-lasting*, and ‘for ever and ever’ is literally ‘the ages of the ages.’ But such an expression as that is just as mysterious as everlasting. I don't think you can really gather anything to guide you from the literal meaning of the Greek words, because you see the same Greek word is used to express the misery of the bad, and the happiness of the good. And we have no authority for applying one interpretation to the one state, and another interpretation to the other.

I must confess to you, I cannot agree with any of the schemes that have been put forth so earnestly of late. I cannot help remembering that Eternity is a long chalk. Eternity? For ever? How do we know, and how can we conceive what God will do with His moral agents throughout eternity? What will He do with the Angels—with Men—with Fallen Spirits? We do not know.

Let us have one word on the brighter side—for, thank God! there is a brighter side. “They that sow to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” God has no pleasure in the death and destruction of sinful men. He wills

that all should come to Him. Have you not often felt His good Spirit striving with you? Oh, listen to His voice, yield to His holy striving: begin to sow to the Spirit—begin to lift up your heart in prayer—begin to strive against sin—cry out to God to help you. He is sure to help you, if you ask Him. If you had been as willing to be saved, as God is to save you, you would have been saved long ago.

Remember, you must sow, if you mean to reap. If you covet everlasting life, with all the blessedness of heaven, you must live for it. You must not expect heaven, if you do not pray, if you do not strive to get thither. You have been sowing the tares and noxious weeds of sin, it may be for many years—Oh, give up that evil practice, fall at God's feet in repentance and confess your sin, and begin to sow the seed of prayer and holy desire and holy strife for a new heart, a regenerate nature and a prospect of heaven. God help you so to do; and bring us all to heaven, at last, for Christ's sake! Yes: we may all reach the mansions there, if we will. Don't imagine you are to live no more, after this little life here. There is a nobler life for you—the 'life everlasting.' The life where you shall see 'the King in His beauty,' and enjoy His purity and love and sweetness, for ever.

X.

ON GOING BACK.

[*A Discourse addressed chiefly to Secularist Working Men.*]

“From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.”—JOHN vi. 66, 67, 68.

“**M**ANY of His disciples went back.” I fear many of His disciples are going back *now*. Many who were His disciples from preserving the creed of their childhood; and many who have been His disciples by Christian profession in riper years. We live at a time when many are going back—some to worldliness of life and indifference to spiritual religion; and many more to open scepticism and denial of all religion. Among the working classes, scepticism has hardly existed for a full century, in this country. For, the working classes were not the readers of Hobbes, and Shaftesbury, and Morgan, and Anthony Collins, and Woolston and Toland, in the last century, since but very few of them could read. It was among the middle

classes and the aristocracy that the disciples of the old English Freethinkers were found. Unbelief, open and declared, began among the working classes in London and the manufacturing districts, with the publication of Thomas Paine's 'Age of Reason.' That was their class-book, once. But the 'Age of Reason' contains no Atheism or Materialism ; and so it has ceased to be their class-book, now. For Unbelief now takes bolder and more defiant forms, among the working classes ; and Unbelief, among them, is rapidly and fearfully increasing.

And who can wonder at that ? Of late years, a Broad Church has sprung up in the State Church, on one side, and a Ritualistic Church, on the other. And, thus, the working classes, disgusted with the superstitious practices of the one, have been encouraged to doubt, with the other. And, now, the Men of Science—the men whom public opinion had come to enthrone as the highest men of their age, because of the benefits which Science has conferred on mankind, and the increased convenience and comfort it has given to their daily life—the Men of Science have become the avowed disciples and teachers of Unbelief.

The older race of scientific men, the grand Discoverers—the really great Men of Science—Newton and Boyle and the Herschells, and the rest—were ever and anon telling mankind that the more

completely they opened the secrets of Nature, the more they were humbled and over-awed by the proofs of God's glorious existence, and wisdom, and power. But, the smaller and modern men of Science—who are not Discoverers, but presumptuous theorists and prophets that something marvellous will be discovered, some time, are all declaring that nothing which they can see in Nature proves design, or contrivance. So declares Herbert Spencer and Professor Tyndall and Professor Huxley, and the rest: Nature proves no design, no contrivance. All we see is the result of Evolution. All is the result of the working of the unintelligent, unconscious, blind Forces of Matter, which are Eternal. Nature proves no personal God, says Professor Tyndall: the very existence of one is *unthinkable*, says Herbert Spencer.

And, thus, the 'Masses,' as they are called—the Working Men who have to toil with hand and brain to win their bread, and who have received no College education—no skilled instruction—but have been left to instruct themselves, or go without instruction, altogether—have been encouraged and emboldened, not only to go back, but to go farther back. The writings of Bishop Colenso were eagerly snatched up by sceptical working men, with a shout of triumph, when they first appeared. But sceptical working men welcome with still greater triumph, and lean still more confidently upon, the theories of

the Men of Science—that is to say, emphatically, of the Men of Knowledge—for that is the literal meaning of the word ‘Science.’ “If the Men of Knowledge do not know what is right, and what is true—who *can* know?” say the working men who are Unbelievers—“if they cannot guide mankind as to what is to be believed and received for truth—who *can* guide us?”

Nor, is doubt and disbelief confined to Working Men, to the Men of Science, and a section of the Clergy of the State Church. The Aristocracy have caught the infection. Our Russells and Seymours are writing Atheistic books; and the Middle Classes are crowding to the sable flag which bears a Death’s-head and cross-bones, and proclaims that there is no Personal God—no All-seeing and Eternal Judge—and no accountability to Him—for there is no conscious hereafter for man. Thus Doubt and Disbelief are filling the minds of thousands. The late Archbishop of Canterbury, while addressing his clergy, a while ago, expressed his alarm at the condition of thought and opinion, in this country; and more lately, Dr. Ellicott, the Bishop of Gloucester, expresses still greater alarm. As yet, the intellectual earthquake has not shaken the more rural districts; but in our manufacturing towns and villages, and in London, men’s minds are unsettled; and this unsettlement, as I have said, extends to thousands.

Many who are thus unsettled have not reached

the dread stage of complete Disbelief. They are feeling an unwillingness to give up their belief of a Future Life, and embrace entirely the new doctrine of Evolution, which gives the unrelenting death-blow to their old belief, and proclaims, unmistakably, that when our life ceases here we lie down with the dogs, and are done with—for we are conscious no more, for ever. All men are not so utterly sunk in the corruption and degradation of Vice, that they care nothing about dying like dogs and perishing for ever. Men, in general, have a shuddering feeling at Nothingness.

“Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?”

exclaims Cato, in the once popular play of Addison. And if the answer he gives is not the true one—

“’Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to Man”—

I say, if that be not the true answer, there is, at least, something within us which shrinks back at the thought of Nothingness—of our becoming utterly extinct and unconscious, for ever.

Thus, while the sceptical theories of the day are unsettling the belief of thousands, the thousands get no happiness from the sceptical theories; and therefore, in their hearts—if not with their tongues—the thousands still ask the question which Peter asks in the text—“To whom shall we go?”

Was there any likeness between the real character of the 'Many' who were *going back* in Christ's time and the thousands who are going back into Doubt and Disbelief now? "From that time many of His disciples went back," says St. John, "and walked no more with Him"—followed Him no longer. "Many of His disciples":—What kind of disciples were they, and who were they? Not the 'twelve,' for Christ addresses them when the others are leaving Him. Who, and what kind of disciples were they who 'went back and walked no more with Him'? *Walked no more with Him.* They must have met with some signal disappointment to their expectations. They must have discovered that Jesus was not the person to give them what they wanted. His declarations must have very plainly revealed to them the fact that they would never obtain their heart's wish and desire from Him—or they would not have gone back never more to walk with Him, or follow Him. Who, and what kind of disciples were they? They could not have been in quest of that 'eternal life' that Peter talks about.

The Gospel writers generally use the word 'disciples' to describe the twelve apostles, or chosen companions of Christ; but they sometimes apply the name more diffusively—so as to include those of Christ's hearers who believed that He was the promised Messiah, and wrought His miracles by

Divine power. Among the members of the crowds that followed the Saviour, there would be various degrees of belief. Some would feel a real confidence that He was the promised Messiah—‘the Son of David’—the true Redeemer foretold by the prophets. Others, would be unsteady, half-believers—men who, one day, manifested zeal for the new Prophet, and, on another, were drawn into disbelief by agents of the priests and other sordid, hypocritical Pharisees, and of the proud, unbelieving Sadducees. While others would have a feeble faith in Christ—just sufficiently strong to lead them to go after Him, in the hope that they would get clearer evidence of His Messiahship, by-and-by. But Christ Himself shows us that our poor fallen human nature was as mean then as it is now—for He declares that the Many sought Him, not because they saw His miracles, but because they ate of the loaves and were filled.

This, then, was the mean, selfish, paltry motive for which the Many—the majority of the crowd—followed Christ! He who ‘knew what was in Man, and needed not that any should tell Him,’ declares it to be the fact. When Christ showed them that He would not let them take Him, by force, to make Him a temporal king—that He did not come to set up a temporal kingdom—to reign at Jerusalem, and drive away the Romans, and make the Jewish nation into a great pre-eminent people who should

win homage and tribute from all the nations of the earth—and when He showed them that they must not expect Him to work miracles and feed them with bread, without their working for it—but that they must receive Him as the spiritual bread from heaven—must believe that His Divine Father gave them this spiritual bread—must feed upon Him with their spirits—must spiritually eat His flesh and drink His blood—they went back, in supercilious scepticism and scorn, and ‘walked no more with Him.’

They had followed Him for material bread ; but He offered them spiritual bread. They and their desires were of the earth, earthy : He was the Lord from heaven. They wanted a Saviour who would satisfy their physical wants, without their exertion of any more labour : He told them that He came to raise their fallen spiritual natures from the degradation of sin and to make them new creatures. They wanted Him to make a coarse heaven, full of physical enjoyment, for them, on earth : He told them that they must be born again, and thus be enabled to live purer and holier lives here, that they might be fitted for the purity and eternal happiness of heaven. But they ‘went back, and walked no more with Him’!

My dear friends, have you not begun to recognise a close likeness between the Many who went back and walked no more with Christ, when He was on

earth, and the Many who are going back and walking no more with Him, now?

What the great mass of mankind still seek is, a heaven on earth—a heaven of their own framing—a heaven where all their physical wants and earthly desires shall be satisfied, without anxiety and without labour: a heaven on earth where there shall be no more twinges of conscience, and where they shall hear no more of a reckoning for sins hereafter. He who will promise men this earthly heaven is still the Messiah that the majority of men seek. It was the Messiah they sought in Christ's time; and it is the Messiah they seek still.

When I was younger, men believed that they had found such a Messiah. He proclaimed himself to be the Regenerator of Human Society. The 'old moral world' was to be swept away, and he would institute the 'New Moral World.' He had the most consummate confidence in himself: a quality without which you cannot win the confidence of others. He believed himself to be infallible; and, therefore, thousands were attracted to believe in him. He affirmed that he had discovered the true secret of happiness, and it resulted from his discovery of one great fundamental truth: that *Man's character is formed for him, not by him.* He proclaimed that Men ought to be grateful for the discovery of this great truth, because it shows them how all things may be rendered pleasant for them here, and how

they may be delivered from the bugbear of a reckoning hereafter. "Man is the creature of circumstance," proclaimed the new Messiah, Robert Owen. "Place him in good circumstances, and Man will be good: place him in bad circumstances, and he will be bad. What Man does he cannot avoid doing. There is no guilt in human actions, and there ought to be no praise and no blame."

You cannot wonder that men reasoned—then, there is no vice and there is no virtue. Nor, can you wonder that they went on to put the reasoning into practice. Harmony Hall was opened—after the failure of some other experiments—Harmony Hall, at Tytherly, in Hampshire, was opened—where this new heaven on earth was to be realised—where the New Moral World was to be instituted. Disciples flocked to it—some to lodge there for a few days or weeks, and see how they liked it: many of these departed soon, and never returned. Others went to settle there, and said they meant to remain. I had a long account given to me some years ago by Isaac Ironside of Sheffield, whom, notwithstanding all his eccentricities, no one who knew him would suspect of falsehood. It was a sorry account, indeed, which he gave me; and I shall trouble you with very little of it.

He turned his little property into money and put it into the estate and establishment at Harmony Hall, and took his young wife with him to live

there, with the resolution that that, in future, should be their home. "We'll have done," said he, "with the old, bad, immoral world, and we'll live in the New Moral World, now, to the end of our lives." I must not tell you the long story he told me about quarrels, and fighting with chairs, and other queer transactions. I will just give you one feature of my friend's story, and then end it. Not long after the opening, a bit of cardboard was placed, conspicuously, in the great dining-room, which was also the great dancing-room, every night—to say that one of the inmates had lost a jewelled brooch, and begged that any one who had found it would restore it. But it was *not* restored; and a few mornings after, another bit of cardboard appeared, intimating that a gold necklace was missing. When the bits of cardboard numbered half-a-dozen, their contents were copied on one larger cardboard. But this had soon to be copied again, and again recopied, until the cardboard was 'an awful-looking thing, both for its size and contents—to be found as a Register of Facts in the New Moral World. For it showed that scores of ornaments—brooches and pins and necklaces and bracelets—had been stolen, and that the thieves were determined thieves, and would not give up their plunder.

And, at length, their Messiah, Robert Owen, the governor of the establishment, solemnly summoned the company together, and pointed to the long list

of thievery, and asked them if they called *that* living in the New Moral World ; and he told them that he was ashamed of them. And they laughed him to scorn, and desired that a new governor might be appointed in his stead. And he left them, accordingly, and then they soon fell to pieces. The strangest thing of all was, that Robert Owen steadfastly believed in his own infallibility and Messiahship to the end—though all his schemes for a New Moral World failed, and—except a few—men ceased to believe in him.

The Men of our day—of the present generation—have got a new Messiah—a Messiah with many heads—Science. Science is their new Messiah. Science, the great wonder-worker. Science, which has given us Steam-power, and Gas-light, and Galvanic-batteries, and Telescopes and Microscopes and Electrical Machines, and Spectrum Analysis and Hundred-ton Cannon and Iron-plated Ships of War, and—Evolution ! Science, which the Men of Science affirm declares that there is no Eternal Intelligence—no Almighty and All-wise Creator ; but, that the Forces of Matter—Gravity and Heat and Light and Electricity and Magnetism—are eternal : for Matter itself is eternal. And either Carbon and Oxygen and Hydrogen and Nitrogen, and the Alkalies and the Acids and the Metals are eternal—or, otherwise the one primal Matter from which they are all derived, and which constituted the original

Atoms and Molecules of the Universe, is eternal. And that what we call 'Life,' in Plants and Animals, is the result of the working of the Forces of Matter ; and Man's intelligence is—simply—'cerebration' : a result of the working of the brain, which is so much water and fat, and albumen and phosphorus and osmозome, and a few acids and salts ;—and that these think, are conscious, will, determine, design, and contrive. Man's life is like that of the beasts : there is both a beginning and an end to it, here. And so men need not trouble themselves about sin, for there is none ; and there will be no reckoning hereafter.

"Come forth, ye honoured heralds of Science !" — thousands are saying in their hearts—" come forth, and proclaim the reign of Reason and the coming of the real—the rational Millennium ! Let the high-priests of Science step forth—so high and unerring in their intelligence—and let us crown them with wreaths of laurels and roses—for they have broken the bondage of the human mind, and dissipated the slavery of superstition and priestcraft.

"We need not be troubled, any more, now, with puzzles either of the Old or New Testament. Let all the old romances about Miracles be accounted simply, as Tales for the Nursery. Let the bugbear of a future state of rewards and punishments be driven out of human memory. Let it be heard of no more ; and let us now live rational lives, enjoying all the

pleasures that are within our reach ; and let us trouble ourselves, no more, about prayer and religion ! ”

Stop ! Do you remember what John Stuart Mill, your dead prophet, said ? Do you remember what Strauss and Renan say ? and what the author of the new book, ‘Spiritual Religion,’ says ?—Christ’s system of morality is the most perfect ever given to the world, and He was the most perfect exemplar, Himself, of the goodness that He taught. And hearken to what Christ proclaims—“What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ?” ‘He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God ; and they that hear shall live. . . . Marvel not at this : for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation.” And listen to the man who, from being the dire persecutor of the new religion, became its fervent apostle and martyr—“Be not deceived : God is not mocked ; for, whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

“We have done with Christ and Paul, too,” cry the disciples of Evolution : “we’re going back, and we’ll walk no more with either Christ or Paul. We’re going back from our old superstitious fears and scare-crows about a future state, and about sin and guilt and punishment. Science is our guide : Science and the Men of Science. We are only a part of the Material Universe ; and there is no spiritual nature. And as for what you call Conscience and the Moral Nature, as Mr. Darwin shows, they are evolved from the nature of animals. “Lower animals, especially the dog,” says Mr. Darwin, “manifest love, reverence, fidelity, and obedience ; and it is from these elements that the religious sentiment in man has been slowly evolved.” We’ll be troubled no more about the Moral Nature and Conscience.”

Will you not ? You cannot help being so troubled. The voice within you will speak, though you turn a deaf ear to every preacher. You cannot silence the voice of Conscience. If you try to persuade yourself that you are only the Creature of Circumstance, and that you are not accountable to a Higher Power for your thoughts and words and actions, Conscience will disturb you, in spite of yourself. When you do wrong, you know you do wrong ; and remorse will torture you, even in the street. It will torture you when you are in the dark, and no human eye sees you : it will torture you in the midst of your pleasure and your stolen and guilty joys. You

might as well try to tear the skin off, in one sheet from your back, as to get quit of Conscience. If you can lay it asleep for a few days, it will awake and visit you with greater terrors. If you try to drown it in drink, it will make you tremble when you are sober. And, if you exercise all the strength of your depraved will, and be determined to sear Conscience as with a red-hot iron, you will feel that you become a base, degraded creature, sunk in sin and vileness and corruption. You will feel you are base, and you will hate yourself. You know that this is true. Whenever you have striven to stifle Conscience, and get yourself to believe that you were not guilty, you could not succeed. You cannot kill Conscience, You have not the power to do it ; nor will all the pernicious reasonings of modern philosophers enable you to do it.

Hark ! Do you not hear that voice, and that solemn question ? “Will ye also go away ?” Has not the Holy Spirit often taken those words of Christ and uttered them within your soul ? “Will ye also go away ?” Stop and consider ! The voice of the Holy Spirit has often brought you to a serious pause when you have been weighing over again the words of the philosophers, and the reasonings of the doubters, and when you have been thinking of the value of what you are giving up, in giving up Christianity. “Will ye also go away ?” Do you still answer, We are going back, we’ll walk no more

with Christ, we'll give up all faith in Christianity? But God does not give you up. You are often compelled by His inward strivings to look at the points of the Christian Evidence that seem undeniable and irrefragable. You know you are. They often come upon you with an overwhelming force. But you get back again to your old sceptical reasonings—I know all about it, for I have gone through it all myself—and, in the misery and agony of your sense of difficulty, you inwardly cry—"To whom shall I go?" But you do not say, "Lord, to whom shall I go?" You do not ask the question, as Peter asked it. You do not ask God for light. You do not go to Him for guidance. You do not pray—for the philosophers tell you it is useless and foolish—they treat prayer with scorn and ridicule. "I am not a praying man!" says, so scornfully, Professor Tyndall. "Let a number of your praying people attend a sick man in one room, and a number of medical men attend a sick man in another room, and let us see which will be healed first: put the value of prayer to the proof!" cry the men who claim to be the leaders of modern thought.

But, in spite of all their proud scorn and in spite of all their ridicule, the value of prayer is real, my doubting and disbelieving friend. If you wish to get light you must pray to the God of light. Remember that "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." You will get the unerring light from Him, and

from none else. He made your mind, and He has access to your mind, every moment ; and, if you do pray to Him, and continue to pray to Him, you are sure to get light from Him Who is the true light, and Who lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Prayer is the only resource you have for getting the true light, my friend, let the philosophers say what they will. Their opinions are very changeable. They have changed again and again, on many important subjects, in the course of my short life.

It will be an awful case for you, my friend, if you refuse to pray, and die in darkness, and find yourself mistaken : find that the Future State is a reality—find yourself before the Eternal Judge, and feel that you deserve His sentence of condemnation. You should not venture such a step in the dark, my friend. You ought to be very sure that there is no sufficient evidence for the Truth of Christianity, and no likelihood of a Future State, before you settle down into dogged disbelief, and say you will neither inquire any more, nor pray any more. Perhaps, you are the father of a family, or the head of an important section of Society, and your example is looked up to, and you are drawing many into disbelief by your example. Ought you not to consider, very seriously, what you are doing ? Should you not be very anxious to be perfectly right ? Will you not be very guilty, if you not only fall into the

pit of ruin yourself, but drag others into it?—your children—your companions—those who look up to your example?

Had you not better listen to Peter's reply to Christ—'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life'? Would not real Christianity make you happy? I mean Christ's *own* Christianity: not the so-called Christianity of any mere man, or sect of men. I mean the Christianity of which He Himself was—as even the sceptical philosophers now say—the highest and most perfect personal example. Can you deny that if all the human world were like Christ, it would be a happy world? If we all had His purity and holiness of character, His meekness and patience, His pity for the wretched and suffering, His zeal to help and relieve them—if we all, like the Saviour, loved all mankind, and strove to do everybody good—would not this human world, amid the natural world with all its beauty, be something like a heaven on earth?

Do not tell me that there are many religious professors who are not what they ought to be—that there are many hypocrites. Christ denounced the hypocrites. Hypocrisy is not religion. I do not ask you to be hypocrites: I ask you to become true and devoted Christians.

Did you ever think of the value of Peter's words—of the preciousness of their full meaning—'Thou hast the words of Eternal Life'? Peter does not

mean that Christ teaches Science. Christ did not come to do that. He knew that Men would pursue Science for themselves, and that God had given them powers of mind wherewith they may pursue Science ; and that though they might yield, for a time, to self-conceit, and make many errors and mistakes, yet they would, doubtless, reach the truth at last, and find the Truths of Science and the Truths of Revelation in perfect agreement. Christ did not come to teach Science ; but to deliver the words of eternal life. He did not come to interfere with Governments, or to remodel all human institutions and set them on the right basis. He came to give men the living words that should centre in Men's souls, and lead them, themselves, to set all institutions right, in the course of time. He came to make Men new creatures. He came to atone for Man's sin, that Man might know his sins forgiven, and so lead a grateful and holy life here, and then share in the blessed life hereafter. The men of Science are teaching Materialism, and that there is no hereafter. But, remember, Christ teaches the contrary, and He teaches it positively. Remember that all Christ teaches of His power to forgive sin and to make men holy,—remember that all He teaches about the reality of the future life,—He teaches positively. He has perfect confidence in the perfect truth, in the infallible correctness, of His own teachings. Whatever insidious doubts philoso-

phers may cast upon Christianity and His teachings—Christ has none. Listen to Him!—

“I am the way, the truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.” “I am the vine, and My Father is the husbandman. . . . I am the vine, ye are the branches, . . . without Me ye can do nothing.” “I am the good shepherd, and I lay down My life for the sheep. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.” “I am not alone, but the Father is with Me.” “Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye shall be also.” “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die.”

All these are the words of eternal life. Christ came to give eternal life: the life of pardon and holiness and happiness, is to be begun here, and to continue for ever, hereafter. It is eternal life. Will you part with your vain reasonings to have this life: this eternal life? Christ waits to give it you. “Ye will not come unto Me that ye may have life,” He says. He invites you to come. He turns none away—“Whosoever cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out,” He declares.

Remember who it is that says, “Will ye also go away?” My dear friend, whether you believe it

or not, Christ died for you, Christ died to save you, Christ endured the agony in the garden of Gethsemane for you—when, ‘being in an agony He prayed the more earnestly.’

I cannot explain to you all the mystery of the Saviour’s suffering ; nor, of the Father’s love in giving His Son for us all : but I tell you He came to redeem us all. Christ’s agony and suffering receive no explanation, for me, on the Unitarian scheme. If He merely came to show us a perfect example, and such suffering closed His life—the suffering becomes more mysterious still. That He suffered thus for the sins of all men—and that ‘God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them’—and that thus, all the prophecies in the Old Testament were fulfilled—and that God’s Moral Government is cleared—removes so much of the veil of mystery, as ought to raise in us gratitude and love in return for God’s everlasting love that led Him to give His Son for us.

I cannot explain other Mysteries to you. I cannot tell you why God suffered Evil and Pain to come into His Universe. Perhaps it could not be otherwise ; I cannot say ; and I advise you all never to trouble yourselves with such a question as the Origin of Evil, for you will never be able to solve it. We are all conscious that we share the Evil there is in the world, and our best and

wisest way is to cry to God to help us to overcome it.

You who are *going back* cannot overcome it. No man yet won the victory over his depraved nature, who did not ask God to help him. If you resolve to walk no more with Christ, you will sink into more depravity. You must sink : it will be impossible for you to rise.

Young Christian man ! you who have been brought up with the practice of family prayer, and Sunday-school instruction and attendance on worship—have you been listening to this vain philosophy, and have you got entangled and puzzled and mystified with it ? And are you thinking of withdrawing from the Church ? At your peril you take such a step ! If you cease to *profess* religion, you will soon become a prey to temptation. You will think, ‘ Well, I may join in this worldly practice, or the other : it has no harm in itself ; and as I am no longer a professor, it does not much matter that I yield a little.’ Oh, beware how Vice creeps round the heart, till, with serpent coils and poisonous fang, it completes a man’s ruin !

What ! are you still resolved to *go back* ? Listen to the Saviour who came to save you, how He still cries—‘ Will ye also go away ? ’ God help you to listen to Him, and to return to Him and cleave to Him, for ever ! Amen.

XI.

CHARLES DARWIN ; AND THE FALLACIES OF EVOLUTION.

[*A Discourse delivered chiefly to Working Men, in various parts
of the Country.*]

WHAT is called the 'Civilised World' seems to be fast losing its celebrities. Germany still retains her Bismarck, as her pre-eminent man ; but France—strange to say—has no pre-eminent man. Italy has lost her last pre-eminent man—the old knight-errant of Freedom, Garibaldi ; and America has lost both her Emerson and Longfellow. Out of the four pre-eminent men of which our own country boasted, three have gone—Carlyle, Darwin, and Disraeli ; and 'the old man eloquent,' Gladstone, alone remains.

The high celebrity of Thomas Carlyle and Benjamin Disraeli extended over many years ; and the pre-eminence of William Ewart Gladstone has been far from evanescent. Mr. Darwin's great celebrity can only be said to date from 1859, when his book, 'The Origin of Species, by Natural Selec-

tion,' set the world on fire—to use a customary phrase. He had been long known, and held in high regard, among Men of Science ; but it was not till the publication of his famous book that he became a celebrity, in the popular sense.

And who *was* Charles Darwin? The grandson of a man who was also a celebrity, in his way—Dr. Erasmus Darwin, known for his curious book, 'Zoonamia ; or, the Loves of the Plants'—a book, containing a theory which has some resemblance to the theories afterwards broached by his grandson. But the name of Dr. Erasmus Darwin was as much known for his conversational contests with Dr. Johnson, as from his authorship of 'Zoonamia.' The good old doctor, you know, was in the habit of visiting Lichfield, his birthplace—where he was always gladly received by his friends ; and Dr. Erasmus Darwin being one of the intellectuals of Lichfield, was naturally brought into contact with Johnson, at these visits. We all remember Boswell's descriptions of the sonorous voice and magisterial style of Johnson, when he took a part in conversation. How he would be victor in an argument, whether he were wrong or right ; and how he would knock a man down with a long word, if he could not win the victory any other way. Now, Dr. Erasmus Darwin was not to be knocked down with a long word—and so the conversation of the two doctors sometimes approached a quarrel.

The son of Dr. Erasmus Darwin hardly appears to have reached the mental robustness of his father; but he seems to have held a respectable rank in his profession as a physician—he was also a Fellow of the Royal Society, and so must have had some knowledge of Science—and we may be sure that he was a man of good common-sense, for he married a good wife. She was the daughter of Josiah Wedgwood, the founder of the prosperity of the Staffordshire Potteries.

I will read you a somewhat delectable paragraph from a Shropshire paper, kindly sent me by a friend. It sheds a kindly light on the memory of our Charles Darwin's father :

SHROPSHIRE WORTHIES.

DR. DARWIN (*November 15th, 1876*).

Robert Waring Darwin settled down to a life-long practice as a physician at Shrewsbury in 1786. His father brought him to Shrewsbury before he was twenty-one years of age, and gave him £20. His uncle sent him a like sum, and this was all the pecuniary aid he ever received. After he had been in practice for six months, he had between forty and fifty patients, which was more surprising because there were in the town, three physicians, six surgeons, and divers apothecaries. He visited the poor without reward, and helped them in other ways, sending fruit and wine to their homes. For full fifty years his practice was wonderful. His little yellow carriage, made to fit him, his two sleek horses, and steady coachman, were continually on the road. He sat as if carved in stone, his unimpassioned, mild,

and thoughtful face inspiring confidence and respect. His height was more than six feet, his bulk was proportionate, and became enormous as age increased. He was a great feeder, and, it was said, could eat a goose as easily as other men do a partridge. He married Susan Wedgwood, who entered zealously into all her husband's pursuits. He took great interest in botany and geology, and the gardens at The Mount were noted for their choice flowers and shrubs. The beauty, variety, and tameness of his pigeons were well known in the neighbourhood. He died 15th November, 1848, aged eighty-two. On the morning of his death, the lowest cottager in the streets leading to The Mount had darkened the windows, and his children stood at the door weeping. Dr. Darwin's love of youngsters was a striking feature of his character. He and his daughters established the first infant school in Shrewsbury at a cost of £300.

The father of Charles Darwin decided on making his son into a physician—from sheer fondness, I suppose, for his own profession. So Charles, while very young, was sent to the University of Edinburgh, where the 'Faculty' was considered to be at its height of scientific excellence. The trial was short. Dr. Jameson, the chief medical professor, sent word to the father that his son Charles had better be sent to some other university—for the youth had no inclination for medicine, and would not attend to the college lessons. So the father next removed Charles to Cambridge, with the intent of making him into a clergyman—but neither did the young man feel inclined to enter the Church. Nor does he seem to have had any inclination for study of any

kind. No love of Nature was awoke in him, as yet. He said that his only love of Nature, at that time, was to hunt foxes and shoot partridges.

Charles Darwin, however, did not waste life for any long period, in mere love of sport. He attended some lectures of Professor Henslow, who had recently held the chair of mineralogy, and now held that of botany. Professor Henslow, like his great contemporary, Dr. Whewell, the famous Master of Trinity, was commonly held to 'know everything.' But, unlike the great Dr. Whewell, he was bland and affectionate in his bearing towards young men ; and he soon won the regard and respect of Charles Darwin. Strangely enough, Darwin, at first, fastened on Entomology as his favourite study ; and became so earnest a student that he discovered a new insect. It was soon duly placed in British Entomology ; and thus Charles Darwin started, even at the outset of his study of Science, as a discoverer.

When he was two-and-twenty, through the interest of Professor Henslow, and with his own eager desire, he was appointed Naturalist, on board the *Beagle*, which ship was about to be sent out on a voyage of discovery, in the Pacific. They visited Brazil—they sailed through the Straits of Magellan—they visited the island of Terra del Fuego, Fiji, and New Zealand. The experience gained in this voyage was considered to be of great value by Darwin himself.

At the age of thirty-one, he married, and settled for life, on a small property at Down, near Beckenham, in Kent. Of course, he visited London occasionally, to attend the meetings of the Royal Society and other meetings of Men of Science. Yet, he may be said to have led a retired and plodding life, in the rural home he had chosen. He became a general and constantly observant student of all Nature around him—he was in constant correspondence with zoologists, botanists, geologists, and all kinds of scientific men.

It was at a meeting of the Linnæan Society, in 1858, that his views as to the 'Origin of Species,' and those of Mr. Alfred Wallace, were broached. Mr. Wallace, you will remember, gave up the lead to Mr. Darwin, and did not put his own views into print, till after the publication of Mr. Darwin's book, in November, 1859.

Mr. Darwin gave great alarm to many thinking people, by the issue of his book. They saw that he had only hinted at what really must form a part of his theory; and they felt sure that when his meaning was fully told, not only the doctrines of Revealed, but of Natural Religion, would be shaken.

"But, do you consider," some may ask, "that Mr. Darwin proclaimed Atheism, by the publication of his book?" No: for, although in the early editions of the 'Origin of Species,' Mr. Darwin never expressed himself piously, nor even reverently (that I

remember) of God, he uses the term 'Creator' several times. That term is the only one by which Mr. Darwin indicates that he had some kind of a belief in the Eternal Author of all things. And, be it observed that Mr. Darwin never puts a single adjective of any kind before the word. It is simply 'The Creator.' He never says 'good' Creator, or 'wise' Creator, or 'Almighty Creator.' So that one cannot help doubting whether the writer of the book had any decided belief in the existence of God, at that time.

And another important fact must be remembered : that almost all who were foremost to express agreement with Mr. Darwin, were also foremost to express their unbelief in religion—their Agnosticism, their Materialism, and, in some cases, their Atheism. Some of the Germans, who seemed to be enraptured with the doctrine of 'Natural Selection,' were terribly out-spoken even with Mr. Darwin's use of the word 'Creator.' "Creator !" said Carl Vogt, "why do you talk about a Creator ? You have turned Him out of doors. You have left Him nothing to do, by *your* theory. Pray talk no more about a Creator, but keep to your Philosophy, which shows us that we can do without Him."

Now, notwithstanding all these bold sceptical declarations of persons who shared Charles Darwin's views, it is by no means clear as to what were his real religious views, or what changes they underwent.

I hold in my hand a small note which will set some of you a-thinking. I was lecturing at Beverley, in Yorkshire, two years and a half ago, when this note was sent to me.

“THE VICARAGE, BEVERLEY :

“*Tuesday, Sept. 19th, 1882.*

“MY DEAR SIR,—I heard your lecture last night with pleasure ; and I beg to inform you that, five weeks ago, I sent a letter to Mr. Darwin’s son, addressed to my uncle, the late Professor Eadie, from his father,—in which he says that he can with confidence look to Calvary.

“Wishing you great success in your lectures here,

“I remain yours respectfully,

“ROBERT EADIE, F.R.G.S.

“THOS. COOPER, ESQ.”

I do not know *when* Charles Darwin told Professor Eadie that he ‘could with confidence look to Calvary’—or what he really meant by it. We were told some time ago that young Mr. Darwin is now trying to collect his father’s letters, that he may publish them. Of course, he will insert the letter to the late Professor Eadie. Let us hope we shall have some explanation of it.

I wish Mr. Darwin had told us his mind fully about God’s existence. But he did not. And as he has now gone to his account, we must leave him in the hands of his Maker—knowing that the Judge of all the earth will do right with him, as He will with every one of us.

Whatever might be his errors, he was, undoubtedly,

a benefactor to his race. He set one great example to mankind in the exercise of that excellent quality of mind—patience. His last book is a wonderful instance of it. More than forty years ago he thought that worms—Earthworms—chiefly formed the moist mould which so generally covers the earth, to a great depth, in some places. He kept worms in pots for several years, and marked how they lived and worked. And, then, he spread a quantity of broken chalk over a field near his house, and then waited thirty years before he had a trench dug across this field, and found the chalk, in every part, seven inches below the surface—showing what the Earthworms had done in thirty years : they had covered the field with mould seven inches in thickness—so that they made nearly a quarter of an inch of mould each year. The man who could wait thirty years for the proof that he wanted was no ordinary man. Such patience is but seldom heard of. Men ruin their prospects and their fortunes very commonly by precipitancy and haste.

His *good temper* was another fine quality. When men attacked him, he took a kindly notice of them. He knew that some of his adherents would take up the cudgels for him—but he did not hastily join in the fight. He stuck to his study of Nature, searching into things which some people would think trifling—but which were all important to him, as he knew they were to mankind.

His *modesty* was another fine quality. He never seemed to be puffed up with the extraordinary praise that some people bestowed upon him ; and he was always ready to acknowledge the merits of others.

But his *sincerity* is the virtue in him which deserves the highest admiration, because it was this quality of mind which rendered his labours of the highest value. He believed he was on the right track in developing his theory ; and, be it remembered, he stuck to it, whatever men might say against it—but was never dogmatical about it. He always called it his ‘theory’ : sixty times, or thereabouts, the expression ‘my theory’ occurs in the early editions of ‘the Origin of Species.’ He did not vapour and say, ‘I have discovered a great truth and you are all bound to believe it.’ No, no ; he called it his ‘theory,’ like a sincere, upright, and truthful man—because he knew it was only a theory, and therefore might, one day, be disproved. He shows himself to be fond of his ‘theory’ : he wishes every body to believe in it—but that one might expect from such an earnest man, who so thoroughly believed in his own theory—himself.

I have said that I wished Mr. Darwin had told us his mind fully about the Almighty Maker. He simply says, first, that the Creator may have given existence to three or four primordial forms of being—but, afterwards he tells us, he thinks it was but *one*.

He thinks the Creator made one primordial form—perhaps microscopical—and all the plants and all the animals and Man, too, have come from that primordial form, in the lapse of millions of millions of years. ‘It is all a question of time,’ says Mr. Darwin, which is just what Hæckel says, the German Evolutionist. But Sir William Thompson and Professor Croll and Professor Tait, all famous mathematicians, say that the earth has not existed so long as Mr. Darwin and Sir Charles Lyell thought. So you see these celebrated men of Science do not agree exactly in all their opinions.

Mr. Darwin stuck to his own theory, which he always called ‘Natural Selection’—never espoused the doctrine of ‘Spontaneous Generation’—and used the term ‘the Creator’ to the end.

Hæckel, the great German, and Mr. Herbert Spencer prefer the word ‘Evolution,’ and Herbert Spencer declares a Personal God to be unthinkable, while Hæckel proclaims the broadest Atheism.

The objection I wish to impress on the minds of all who hear me—the objection to all theories of Evolution—and, therefore, to Charles Darwin’s theory, is that there is no Fact-proof—I am coining a word on purpose—to establish any of these theories. We never see the routine of Nature altered, as it regards living creatures: they all take their life from living creatures. Some of the very lowest kinds of them separate into pieces, and the pieces become

whole living creatures of the same species. The way in which the more predominant animals, beasts, birds, reptiles, fishes, insects,—like our own species,—begin their existence is in the form of an egg. And the most skilful microscopists, it is declared, can see no difference in the eggs.

If he had before him an egg from the womb of a lioness, another from that of a rabbit, an eagle or a pigeon, a whale or a mackerel, the most skilful microscopist could not tell to which creature any one egg belonged, unless he knew beforehand. With the most patient and diligent observation he watches, and sees the egg change into what is called the mulberry-mass, and then take other forms, until, at length, it takes the form of a fish, and so remains—while another passes on and takes the form of a reptile—another still further, and takes the form of a bird—another that of a quadruped, and another that of a human being.

This study is called ‘Embryology’; and it is fixed upon as giving what Huxley and others contend is irrefragable proof that we human creatures are, simply, developments of animal nature, which thus proceeds, step by step, in the Embryon state. Let it be noted, however, that the fact needs qualifying (or the statement of it). The resemblance is *not* complete, in every instance : in some instances it is remarkable, and in others the resemblance is but slight. Had you and I, each, at a very early period

of our existence, the form of a fish? Not exactly; but a form something like some part of a fish. Did we afterwards resemble a reptile? The heart and some other part of us were like parts of a reptile; and so on for our resemblance to a bird, or a beast.

I repeat, we never see the routine of Nature altered, as it regards the successions of animal life. The insect lays a number of eggs, and the eggs become caterpillars—some of them minute and some of them large, devouring creatures, which have holes at their sides for breathing, and walk fast on short stumpy legs or feet. The caterpillar hangs itself up in a pendent coffin, and becomes an aurelia or chrysalis; and, at length, there bursts from the chrysalis the imago, or winged insect—sometimes covered with a very beautiful adornment of colours, and gifted with eyes which have thousands of lenses. The beginnings of Life are very humble, compared with this, in frogs and fishes. The mature animal casts out spawn, and the new animals are developed from egg-spawn. Quadrupeds, together with the whale and a few other marine creatures, bring forth their young alive—while the birds lay their eggs, having formed a nest by instinct, and sit upon the eggs till the young birds chip the shell and begin to breathe the air.

This is all routine in Nature. We never see it altered. Mr. Darwin or Professor Huxley never saw it altered: they never heard of its having been

altered. The insect always comes to the imago state by the same steps : egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, and insect. And every kind of insect always comes to maturity as that kind of insect, and no other : the caterpillar of the cabbage-butterfly never develops into the Admiral, or the Camberwell Beauty : the egg of the Gamma Moth never develops into the Sphinx Atropos, or Death's-head Moth. So it is with the fishes, the reptiles, the birds, the mammalia : the spawn of the Stickleback or Gudgeon never develop into Barbel or Pike : the eggs of the Lizard never develop into Crocodiles : the eggs of the Hedge Sparrow or Linnet never produce Falcons or Vultures : the fœtus of a Rabbit or a Guinea-pig never develops into a Mastiff or a Lion.

Now, how,—seeing this daily and hourly routine of Nature, as it regards the production of living creatures,—how can Huxley assert that Evolution is proved ? We do not see it. Evolution lacks the *real* proof : *Fact*-proof, as I have called it. Give us *Fact*-proof and we will receive the doctrine, whether it be called Evolution, or Development, or Natural Selection, or Transmutation of Species.

Huxley holds that Geology gives him positive proof of Evolution. He has traced the gradual formation of the Horse, through a succession of forms, beginning with one no bigger than a cat, up to the Horse of our period. Agassiz, whose death was such a loss to Science, would have told him that

he had no proof that the very small animal was the progenitor of the larger one. This was what Agassiz maintained to the end. "We find a succession of similar forms, but we have not the slightest proof that one is derived from the other," are his words, in his work on "Classification."

There is one thought to which I venture to call your special attention. It may be that what is called 'Evolution' has become popular because it really gratifies our fallen human nature. We do not like the mystery with which we are surrounded in Nature. We fancy there is a something we can understand better, in the notion that one animal is but an advancement from another. Time, circumstances, or surroundings have each contributed to the change. 'Descent with modification'—'Natural Selection'—'Survival of the Fittest'—"Oh, why should it not be so? The theory is far more comprehensible than your Creation scheme: your notion that God made a few forms of a simple kind at first—the petrifications of which we find in the earliest Palæozoic rocks: that after certain changes had been brought about by water or other agencies, He substituted more advanced animal and vegetable forms for the simpler ones which had been destroyed: and that the Maker acted on the same process, as the successive Geologic changes came about—Devonian rocks and then Carboniferous, Magnesian Limestone and New Red Sandstone, Lias, and

Oolite and Chalk—substituting new vegetables and animals as the older were swept away by mighty deluges, or other catastrophes—Oh, sir! whatever people may say about the genius of Cuvier and the rest, their notions seem very clumsy, very clumsy indeed!”

And there is no wonder that men talk that way, when professors like Huxley endeavour to render our ideas of creation as clumsy as possible. “How can we conceive of the likelihood of God taking a mass of clay and moulding it into a certain form, when he made Man? But such is the common idea.” So he says.

‘Common idea, Professor Huxley!’ It may be the common idea with half-idiots; but no man of intelligence has such a conception of God’s way of creating. “Let there be Light; and there was Light!” we read in Genesis; and our reason—nay, our common-sense—should lead us, if we really believe in God’s existence, to conclude that a simple act of His will is His mode of creation. He willed that the Universe should exist, and it did exist. He willed that Matter should exist, and it did exist. He willed that Suns and Systems should exist, and they do exist. He willed that Vegetable and Animal forms should exist—perhaps—on some millions of planets rolling around their different Suns. He willed the flowers should exist—some in seed, some in bud, some in flower, and

they did exist. He willed that varied animal forms should exist—some to tenant the water, some to take their flight in the air, and some to inhabit the earth ; and He said—that is, He willed—“Let us make Man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion,” etc. “So God created man in His own image : in the image of God created He him.”

The Geological Record shows that the earth was prepared for Man before God created him ; and Palæontology shows that Man was prefigured long before he came.

You have all heard of Hæckel's pedigree of Man, comprising twenty-two generations—from the Moneron to Man ; and how he insists that the Anthropoid Apes are our grandsires, and our real fathers are the Pithecanthropoi, or Dumb-Ape-Men, who first learnt to talk. We never find any relic of our fathers, for, says Hæckel, they, doubtless, lived chiefly in the island of Lemuria—which is now sunk in the Indian Ocean!

But how came the theory of Evolution as it was first presented to us by Mr. Darwin to be altered ? What originated this conception of Hæckel ? you will ask. What led him to imagine that there must be an intermediate race of creatures, coming between us and the higher Apes ?

1. Yes : that is an important question—for the answer to it forms one of the reasons—nay, the very first and commanding reason, why we should *not*

believe that we came out of any kind of Apes whatever. I mean that Man is a being with an intellect having no limit of power that we can fix or determine, while the highest Apes are merely wild animals found in the tropical forests, and living in the practice of mere animal instincts. This was the fact which led Alfred Wallace to differ from Mr. Darwin, in the outset of this 'new-Philosophy.'

Think of what Man has done, and then think of the poor Apes living in their savage state in the woods and never coming out of that state, all these thousands of years. What has Man done? He has dug into the earth and brought up the ores of gold and silver and platinum and copper and tin and lead and iron and subjected them to fiery treatment, and then moulded them into such shapes as suited his purposes. With the tools and instruments formed from metals, he can hew the rock, and mould that into forms that suit his purposes, and he can fell the trees of the forest and make them serve his purposes as well. Can an Ape do the same? Did you ever hear of an Ape that made a knife, an axe, a saw, a pair of scissors, a chisel, a gimlet—that made nails and drove them into planks with a hammer—and constructed a raft of wood to pass over a stream—or made use of a staff as a lever to raise a piece of timber—or constructed a wheel and pulley—or made a rule and measured feet and inches—or constructed a pair of scales with a set of weights—or a

set of measures for solids or liquids? Did any of you ever hear of an Ape that invented a rat-trap or made a wheelbarrow?

We are merely speaking of the beginnings of human civilisation, you know, at present. But the very fact of these beginnings must have driven our modern philosophers to think. And so, at length, one said he suspected, and another said he doubted, and they saw that their whole theory of Evolution must slip away if some more likely link than the Anthropoid Apes could not be found to connect Man with the Beasts. But they could not find such a link; and so Hæckel invented the Pithecanthropoi or Dumb-Ape-Men. But then, you know, they are sunk in the Indian Ocean!

2. Again: when they began to consider the theory more fully, they found it to be undeniable, after all their flourishes of the resemblance of Man to the Ape, that the average brain of the Apes is not more than half the size of the average brain of Man. The measurement of brain in the highest Ape—the largest measurement yet found—is stated to be thirty-four cubic inches; and the brain of the lowest human savages is stated to be sixty-eight cubic inches. It is common to find a human brain measuring ninety-four cubic inches; and the brains of the highest intellectual men reach a hundred. On the other hand, the brain of a male orang-outang, which had a body as bulky as a small-sized man,

was found to measure only twenty-eight inches ; and the brain of a gorilla, which had a body as heavy as that of any ordinary man, only measured thirty-four cubic inches.

It was this remarkable difference in the size of the brains of Apes compared with the brains of men—even of the lowest savages—which led Mr. Wallace—(whose name, you will remember, was associated with that of Mr. Darwin, in the origination of the theory of ‘Natural Selection’)—to protest against the application of the theory to Man. A human savage, Mr. Wallace contends, possesses a brain which he only uses in part. He has more brain than he needs. He is evidently provided with a brain ready for instruction : a brain fitted for civilisation. But you could not civilise an Ape : he has not a brain fitted to receive instruction and civilisation.

Note the stuffed Gorilla in the British Museum. How the lumpy brow protrudes, and the head slopes backward, leaving no room for a forehead ! A phrenologist would tell you that there is no room there for ‘causality and comparison,’ for ‘ideality and constructiveness,’ nor any for ‘benevolence’ : in brief, he would assure you that the animal before you is *only* an animal : you could not deal with it as having what we call a mind. And what little we know about the gorilla proves it. He goes to the wood fires which the black natives of Africa make,

in the wet seasons—for they run away when they see him coming ; and he remains till the fire is burnt out, warming himself—but he never has the sense to put a stick on to keep the fire in, although there is a pile of wood close at hand. But the lowest human savage would have put the stick on, and as many sticks as were needed.

Neither can the gorilla, or any other Ape, point with his finger—for that is a sign of civilisation. An Ape ‘must be cunning to do it,’ as we say—seeing he has not the sinews and muscles, in the hand and forearm, which would enable him to do it. God does not throw the furniture of the bodies of the animals He makes away. He gives each animal a body, and the kind of intelligence suited to it.

Since I have mentioned Mr. Wallace, we will just glance at his other reasons for differing from Mr. Darwin. We will return to the primary topic—Man’s immense mental or intellectual superiority to the Apes ; but we will, if you please, spend a few moments in looking at Mr. Wallace’s reasonings concerning other differences between Man and the Apes.

3. The Apes are covered with hair and Man is naked. But Mr. Darwin’s theory of Natural Selection could not—or ought not—to have stripped the hair from Man’s body, if he came out of the Apes, for Mr. Darwin most explicitly declares that Natural Selection *always* makes useful changes in the frames of the creatures, and never any that are for their

injury. But if Man were, at first, half an Ape and could not speak, he needed a good thick coat of fur to keep him warm. Nothing could have benefited him more than a good thick coat of hair. So Mr. Wallace concludes, and very sensibly, that since all human beings—even the rudest and savagest—are naked by nature, they could not have come out of the Apes by Natural Selection.

4. Mr. Wallace also points to other differences in the body of Man, as compared with the Apes, and argues they are proofs that although all other animals may have come into existence by Evolution, *Man has not*. The Apes *can* walk upright; but it is not natural to them: they are evermore getting on all-fours. But the walking on all-fours is a painful method to us: some of us could not support it for a minute without pain.

Cuvier—the greatest of all zoologists, whose system the Evolutionists do not like—places Man in an order by himself, ‘Bimana,’ or Two-handed animals; and terms the Apes and Monkeys, ‘Quadrumana,’ or Four-handed animals: for he contends they have no feet: their hinder limbs, as well as the fore-limbs, are furnished with hands. They are neither fitted to walk upright nor on the ground—but to live in trees: they are expressly climbing animals. But how different is the hand of either the gorilla, the chimpanzee, or the orang-outang, from the hand of a man! The thumb is so

imperfectly and so differently placed that it gives the hand no variety of power—while the human hand, as Mr. Wallace observes, “has all the appearance of an organ prepared for the use of civilised Man, and one which was required to render civilisation possible.” He means that Man’s hand, directed by his mind, renders him the master of the world in which he lives—which, you know, cannot be said either of Apes or Monkeys.

5. Professor Henslow has a remark worth notice. The higher Apes are found only in tropical climates ; and they seldom live long when brought to Europe. The cold kills them. It would not appear, then, that they are the ancestors of Man, for he can live in every climate. Darwin found the black natives of Terra del Fuego—the extreme south of America—perfectly naked, and sleeping on the bare ground without any covering. Naked, remember, notwithstanding the cold climate ; and yet the Apes, although covered with hair, die when they are brought to Europe.

6. Man’s gift of Language, alone, one thinks, ought to convince the Evolutionists that he does not come out of the Beasts. ‘Oh,’ say they, ‘animals all utter sounds which are understood among themselves.’ What a childish observation. Sounds ! Man does not merely utter distinct sounds ; but he writes his speech. He invents marks, quite arbitrary marks, to represent his thoughts, and can send them

to his fellow-men on the other side of the globe, thousands of miles off: he can hand down the marks to his posterity, and mankind can read his thoughts even thousands of years after his death. The Apes! Where are their writings? Why, nobody can teach them to talk. You can teach a parrot, a jay, a magpie, a jackdaw, or a starling, to talk: that is to say, to utter imitative words—but they do not know what the words mean. If you could teach an Ape or a Monkey even to do that, it would be something—but you cannot teach them one word of human speech. The languages of Man are countless—but in not one of them can you teach an Ape or a Monkey one word.

7. We have Man's history for several thousands of years—but it contains no account of a civilised Ape or Monkey. Egypt reveals her mighty pyramids, her lofty obelisks, her gigantic statues, her tombs hewn in the rock, the walls covered with paintings having colours as vivid as if they were finished but yesterday. Among the painted figures are the Green Monkey and the Gibbon Ape, each with a chain round its neck, a captive taken in the forest, and led for show, as a curiosity. What such animals are now, they were then; and some of these painted figures are 4,000 years old. No reader of the hieroglyphics ever discovers any account of how the Apes and Monkeys came to help the Egyptians when they embalmed the bodies of Men and stored them

away, by thousands, in the mummy caves—or to help them to build the grand temples and cities of Thebes, with its hundred gates, and Memphis, and Luxor, and Carnac—or, above all, the wondrous pyramids.

Babylon had also her hundred gates, her tunnel under the Euphrates, her hanging gardens, her walls on which three chariots could drive abreast, and other wonders—but Herodotus does not tell us that Apes or Monkeys assisted the architects.

Nineveh—did they render any assistance there? Did they help to carve you monstrous winged bulls, and winged lions, in marble, which almost appal a visitor to the British Museum, as he sees them for the first time? Did Mr. George Smith find any record of the intellectual achievements of the Apes, when he read in the cuneiform letters on cylinders of hardened clay those records confirming our Bible account of the Deluge—did he find such accounts, I say?

India is always reckoned to be one of the native countries of the Apes; but neither in the Vedic hymns, nor any other fragments that remain of its ancient literature, is there any catalogue of the deeds of civilised Apes. We are never told that they mastered the mysteries of the Sanscrit: that most ancient and most difficult of all languages, the attempt to master which has driven many an European scholar to despair.

Let us leave the childhood of antiquity, and come to its manhood. The broken marbles of Ionic Greece have lately reached the British Museum—and the splendid ruins from the Parthenon of Athens have been there many years. But no inscription tells us that Apes ever handled the mallet and chisel to create those sculptures which no modern artist can equal.

Imperial Rome has left its triumphal arches and columns—the noble ruins of grand aqueducts and amphitheatres and temples—and, above all, the records of its gigantic power ; but we are never told by Livy or Tacitus that they were Apes, and not men, who formed the Roman legions, and were the chief gladiators in the public games.

The Middle Ages—as they are called—take one glance at them : the great age of cathedral building in Europe. Think not only of the gorgeous St. Peter's at Rome—the graceful interior of Milan—and the vast pile of Cologne—but lift your gaze to one of our own cathedrals—and then inquire if the Apes helped to build them ; try to imagine a number of Apes building a cathedral—if you can.

And, now, think of our modern civilisation—the civilisation of our own life-time : think of the thousands of miles of railroads in Europe and America and elsewhere : think of the magnificent bridges in various lands : think of the lines of telegraphic wires and of our discoveries in electricity :

think of the steam-ships of the world : think of the war-ships with their plates of armour—and think of a company of apes working in an iron foundry and helping to pour out the melted metal into moulds !

Think ? but we are only glancing at our modern *material* civilisation. We are not thinking of what is best worth thinking about. Think of the written records of Men's thoughts for perhaps eight or ten thousand years : from the first roll of Genesis to the last page of Darwin. Think of the Poets and Philosophers and Orators of old Greece and think of the great intellectual Men of modern times. What d'ye think of a Gorilla writing another Iliad or Odyssey ? What d'ye think of a Chimpanzee writing a new 'Paradise Lost' ? What d'ye think of an Orang-Outang composing another 'Lear,' another 'Macbeth,' another 'Hamlet,' or 'Othello' ? Oh ! how could any man ever dream that Man is only an improved Ape—that the Apes are our grand-fathers ?—that we really come out of the Anthropoid Apes, who were the fathers of our fathers, the Pithecanthropoi, who lived on the island Lemuria, which is sunk in the Indian Ocean ?

If there were time we might pursue our questioning in the other important directions, comparing Man with the Apes. We might consider, for instance, that Man is a mathematical creature. He counts, he reckons, he measures, he deals with shapes, figures, and proportions. Can one of the Apes perform a

sum in addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division? Are any of them skilled in algebra? Can any of them show us the difference between length, breadth, and thickness?—or the difference between a plane and a solid?—or the difference between a triangle and a square, between a circle and an oval, between a cube and a globe? Has an Ape ever tried to measure time? has one ever invented either an hour-glass or a dial, a clock or a watch?

8. Let us come to what is still more important than all we have hitherto considered: Man is a Moral Agent. The Apes have Perception, Memory, Affections, and Will—but we have no evidence that they possess the Moral faculty we call Conscience. The Apes associate with each other, it is said, but seldom: the monkeys go in troops. From all we are able to judge of the monkeys when they are captured, they are the most mischievous, thievish rascals in existence. We never heard any even of our modern philosophers assert that Monkeys have a conscience. And the Apes have given no evidence of having one—though Mr. Darwin thought if we began with the dog, which has fidelity and other fine qualities, we might reason it out that Man's conscience originated with the animals. But nobody says we descended from the dogs; and nobody proves to us that any Ape possesses a conscience. How strange that we should be so different from our grandfathers!

And why is it our grandfathers don't grow wiser and nobler, if Evolution be true? Where is the Evolution? We want to see it. Mr. Darwin very piously says we ought to reverence our ancestors. But what can we reverence in an Ape or a Monkey? Do they improve—do they advance intellectually? Read Charles Waterton's 'Wanderings in South America,' and learn how the Monkeys live in the primeval forests of the Equinoctial regions, near the great rivers of Amazon and Orinoco.

When you have read Waterton's account of the primeval forests and the animal tribes that inhabit them, reconsider Civilised Man, his crowded cities, his busy and orderly manufactories, his habitations, his garments, his prepared food, his inventions, his carriages, his ships, his telescopes, his microscopes, his powerful machinery, his libraries with their millions of books—and believe, if you can, that the Apes are our grandfathers.

No, no : we cannot believe that we come out of the Anthropoid Apes. We cannot acknowledge either the Gorilla, the Chimpanzee, or the Orang-Outang as our blood-relations. We acknowledge that God has made of one blood all the nations of Men on the earth—but not the Apes and Monkeys ; and we fall back on the earliest declaration of Man's origin there is in the world : "So God created Man in His own image : in the image of God created He him." Why is the declaration *repeated in the same sentence?*

Doubtless, to impress the great truth which the declaration sets forth more fully and completely upon the mind. The repetition seems to anticipate that the truth of the declaration might be denied

When the sacred record declares that God created Man in His Own image, it means His Moral and Spiritual Image. Man is a being with a conscience, as we said before. The more fully his intellectual and moral nature is cultivated, the more authoritatively Conscience asserts its power over him. It condemns him when he does wrong. And, if he endeavours to excuse himself, Conscience says, 'No no ; you know you are a scoundrel, and it is of no use your attempting to deny it.' And if, in spite of the power of Conscience, Man will persevere in sin, he becomes a morally degraded being.

And Man is also created in the Spiritual nature or image of God : a nature which enables him to commune with God, as a Spirit. No ape or monkey can commune with its Maker. Neither of them can lift up the heart to God in prayer.

Man, at first, was holy, and his communion with God was high and exalted. He fell, and forfeited his purity ; and we are thus fallen creatures, as descendants from fallen creatures. But God sent His Son into the world to save Man : not to save the Apes—not to render them holy and fit for heaven : Christ died for all Men—but not for one Gorilla, Chimpanzee, or Orang-Outang that ever was born into

the world. No, no: Jesus Christ is the Saviour of Men, not of monkeys.

Man is a spiritual being ; and "God is a Spirit," says His Son ; and "they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth." "For, the Father seeketh such to worship Him," Christ also says. So, then, although we are indeed fallen spirits, we can be restored, and thus be able to have fellowship with the 'Father and the Son'—the highest privilege, the most ineffable bliss that any creature can enjoy. God help us all to seek that restoration with all our hearts, for Christ's sake !

XII.

LETTERS TO YOUNG WORKING MEN.

IN the 'Plain Speaker' of 1849, I published 'Eight Letters to the Young Men of the Working Classes.' They were afterwards republished, in a pamphlet; but that has been long out of print. When I say hundreds of young working-men expressed their hearts' thankfulness for the Letters, I am strictly within the bounds of truth. And more: many of them came to the resolve to be men of reading and reflection, and formed plans of study which led not only to their intellectual, but also to their social advancement.

Some of these young men, now grown up, and taking an active and influential part in public life, have desired me, over and over again, to republish the Letters. But I demurred to the propriety of their request, because I saw that I could not comply with it without making considerable alterations, in order to adapt the counsels to our altered circumstances. For instance, many of the books I recommended may now be considered almost obsolete—

except for the mere lovers of old books ; and there are many passing sentences and remarks in the original Letters which it would be useless to repeat. So I have curtailed some of the Letters, considerably.

One thing I have *not* done which some may think I ought to have done. I address Working-men as they were ; an unenfranchised mass of men. Why do I not remind them that their circumstances are now altered ? Because they do not yet possess the privileges promised. I want to see them start in the new political race, and know how they thrive in it, before I change my tone in talking to them.

LETTER I.

“ This above all—To thine own self be true ;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.”

HAMLET.

MEN OF THE FUTURE,—The style of the apostrophe may seem somewhat French ; but I do not use it for the sake of effect—a custom too common with our neighbours. I aim to impress upon your minds at the outset, a weighty consciousness that to you belongs an important part in the great theatre of life. Some of you may be destined to be actors on its public stage—for the great changes of Europe fore-show that our order cannot long remain unenfranchised in England ; and with the possession of

the Franchise a broad path will be opened for the public exercise of native talent. While by those who, from indisposition to mingle in the strife of the great world, may remain spectators, responsible duties will have to be performed.

Loving my country, passionately, for its transcendent literature, its heroic line of patriots, its "noble army of martyrs," its inexhaustible and invincible energy in enterprise and discovery, in industry and invention,—I long to be helpful in leading you to the resolve which shall calmly and yet earnestly proclaim, in your daily life, rather than in your words—"whatever deprivations we may suffer, whatever wrongs we may for a while have to endure, whatever difficulties we may have to encounter,—we will do our part to make this England, and *ourselves*, worthy of our fathers' memories!"

Let no hard-minded scoffer persuade you that this would be the language of romance. True and worthy emotions, justified by reason, never deserve that censure. The realm of peerless Alfred,—the cradle land of Shakspeare,—that earth made sacred by the ashes of Wickliffe and Latimer, by the blood of Hampden and Sydney,—the soil on which were reared Chaucer and Milton, Byron and Shelley,—where Bacon arose to remodel all human knowledge, Newton to span and gauge the circles and depths of the material universe, and Locke to form anew the science of the mind,—the land where the godlike phi-

lanthropist Howard, the "circumnavigator of charity," first drew breath,—shall anyone be able to persuade you that it is romantic to feel unsubduable and glowing emotion while remembering that "this is *your* own—*your* native land?"—romantic to say, you will do your part to render the future England, and yourselves, worthy of such glorious memories?

What shall we do,—do you say,—to prove that we are animated by these high, but rational emotions? I answer—strive, in spite of all difficulties and deprivations, and with the cheering faith that they *for you* are but temporary, to raise yourselves morally and intellectually,—and so, shame those who say you are not fit for the franchise into the perception that you deserve it better, perhaps, than themselves, and that you must and will have it.

Let me have your attention, however, while I endeavour to propound this answer, more at large; and regard this answer as that of one who has partaken of your oppressions and sufferings, and who, therefore, speaks in sympathy and affection while he speaks faithfully.

To rise morally, it is necessary that our order should display true brotherhood for its own members; courtesy, kindness and conciliation towards the upright and sincere of other classes; and a determination to shun all the vices of every class, but especially the vices of our oppressors.

Some years ago, when the "aristocracy of trades"

was rampant, the workman, whose wages were low, was often scorned as loftily by his better paid fellow labourer, as the latter was scorned in turn by his purse-proud employer. At that time, a public-house in Birmingham would have two parlours—one with the door labelled, simply, “Button-makers” and the other with the hinged entrance distinguished as that of “*Gentlemen* Button-makers.” If the humble workman who was earning but a pound per week stumbled, by mistake, into the room where the “Gentlemen Button-makers,” who could earn their five pounds weekly, were sitting over their spirit and water, he would at once be ordered to “leave the room,”—and that in no gentle fashion. Those days are gone by, and much of that repulsive spirit of aristocracy is ended among working men. But there is too great a leaven of it remaining. Be assured, however, it must go altogether, if working men would aid each others’ happiness. Estrangement from each other, by any cause, must delay the winning of your rights ; and I crave leave to say, with all deference, in many other respects, to Jeremy Bentham and his disciples,—that you have rights, and natural rights too,—and that one of those natural rights is the Franchise ; but estrangement arising from the culture of the basest and most sordid species of pride, must keep you morally low and degraded, by engendering the bitterest feelings on either side. To make common cause successfully,

for Democracy, you must *begin* with democratic practice among yourselves.

Communal help, too, as far as you can give it, is your duty. I mean, to your brothers who *will* work, and *do* work—when they can get it. The begging “profession” is just now receiving some formidable blows from the public press; and you have as much cause—ay, and more,—to wish imposture of this kind put an end to, as the rich have; for you suffer more heavily by it than they. But the prevalence of imposture must not harden your hearts against the relief of real want, when you have it in your power; and your power, though small, may often avail to save a brother from starvation. Do not direct your poorer brother to the rich man for help, if you have the slightest power to help him yourselves. If the rich man be unwilling to help you, will your poorer brother stand a better chance with him?

And how often will some little service aid another, which will cost you nothing? No one knows, but he who makes the experiment, what an amount of happiness can be diffused in a neighbourhood, or in a company of workmen, by setting the example of kindness and mutual help. The exchange of services might have made the world happy before now. Try to begin it—to infuse that spirit into the minds of all with whom you have to do; try it perseveringly, and you will commence the world’s

truest and greatest reform. All social and political oppressions will fall before it. Try it, and feel the sweetness of creating kindness and goodwill in your own circles ; remembering that the element of goodness has an inherent expansive power ; that it will spread itself, and that you cannot limit the extent of your example by what you witness of its effects.

You will hear it objected, that to show this disposition will speedily subject you to all kinds of disadvantage ; that the elder working men in an establishment, who partake of the taint of a bad system, will soon lay upon you all kinds of burdens,—some of them by way of mockery,—if they find you willing to bear them from a spirit of philanthropic chivalry. But I am not urging you to a voluntary slavery : your own good sense will preserve you from that. You cannot fail to withstand tyranny with calmness and dignity,—if, from a conviction of its injustice and evil influence you have devoted yourself to the struggle for putting it down, and have chosen kindness as your polished weapon, because assured of its super-excellence. Do you know any intelligent man who recommends goodwill by precept and example ? Mark him, and you will find him speak out plainly against an oppressor. Do not believe the unthinking neglecters of self-discipline who tell you that the truly “gentle”-man must needs be a sneak ; they do not know what they are talking about.

I say this to you because you are young, and therefore you can form the habits which will issue in your own happiness, as well as aid the world's, and your country's moral advancement. It is not the upgrown oak which can be bent, but the sapling. And if you imbibe the manners of some men of mature years, who were formed under a bad system, and caught their habits of harshness and selfishness from it, what can you become but tyrants to those who grow up under you? while, if you remodel the customs and reform the bearing of working men towards each other, how easy will it be for the young to learn of you when you become mature; and how consoling, then, will be the reflection that you are likely to leave the world better than you found it?

Let me say a word on your relations to your employers. You may be conscious, in some instances, that the terms under which you serve them are hard, nay unjust. You may be looking to a time when the "Organization of Labour" shall banish the servile notions at present entertained of the relationship between the capitalist and workman. These "new ideas" as they are called, I know, are more widely extended, even in England, than some people believe them to be, and are far more widely extended than others wish it to be believed they are. Whether these ideas are capable of realization, France, in spite of all apparently increasing

obstacles,—will, ere long, put to the proof. You have a right to ponder upon them. Your duty to yourselves, and to the world, if you believe it can be made happier by the removal of Inequality, demand that you should ponder upon them. But while your present relations subsist, discharge your bond honourably and faithfully. You engage to perform certain labour under given terms. Consider the engagement as sacred. Rather go beyond it than fall short of it. Your honour, your truth, must be maintained, even under a system you may think unjust. Above all things cultivate the esteem of a kindly employer. Refuse no little occasional over-service for him. Your common-sense will direct you to stop when encroachments might be made upon your time or strength, from the growth of his selfishness by your over-yielding. But resolve to prove to the capitalist that you are a man of honour, though but a working man. This will do more to remove his prejudices against the extension of the franchise to our order than twenty homilies, though ever so eloquently spoken or written.

I must presume to advise you on some nearer relations in life. Your parents,—whatever may be the maxims some may laughingly utter in your ear,—must never be left without help, if you can help them. There will be plenty of advisers to tell you that you have a right to consult your own interest and pleasure, and to leave an aged father or mother

to the parish, or to penury. If you heed them, reflection in after life will lead you to regard their words as syllables of deadly poison. Neglect of filial duty brings the keenest torment ; for the ever-recurring remembrance is that the opportunity is gone,—that the error cannot be remedied. Or, if this torment be unfelt, it is because the heart is seared, and the man is thoroughly degraded. Nothing brings such welcome satisfaction to the mind, in after-life, as the consciousness that though a parent passed to the grave amidst pain and suffering prolonged, we did all that we were able to do to relieve the sufferer, and to gladden, in some degree, the downward path of sorrow. I never yet knew a good man who was a bad son. I have not seen any man aid in making the world happier or better who was careless of relieving the sorrow or want of an aged parent. If England were filled with unfilial children, the sun might be ashamed to shine upon it, and it were better sunk in the sea ; for with the extinction of the first natural affection its inhabitants would cease to be men, and sink below some of the brutes.

If you wish to bear that highest of all names then, worthily, be jealous over your own hearts, if you feel you are losing filial affection, or growing disposed to prefer some vain pleasure to the discharge of its dictates. Above all, do not marry, to leave a parent in helpless want.

Why so much marrying in early life, under any circumstances? I must urge the question, even if you be offended with it. I am no disciple of Malthus, as the working men of London can testify for the present, and the men of the Midlands for the past. This country, if properly cultivated, and freed from restrictions on industry, could feed three times its number of inhabitants now; and there can be no limit placed upon what science and commerce could enable it to do for the generations to come. But, amidst its disabilities of imperfect cultivation, the fetters of its industrial system, and the unjust and unequal distribution of what it does produce, why bring increasing numbers into the world to toil and suffer, and thereby increase your own suffering? True, there are others who consider themselves at liberty to "increase and multiply," and to live upon your earnings, in riotous plenty; but you cannot revenge yourselves upon them by marrying improvidently. This evil system under which we live must be changed by other means.

Self-denial must aid your deliverance. The more the toilers under the present system are increased, the lower the price of toil must be depressed. I need not repeat that doctrine in your ears. It has been often and painfully repeated, as if it were an *eternal* truth. I do not believe it to be so; and devoutly trust the time will come when *all* will esteem it a sacred duty to toil, when the universal

toil will be comparatively light and yet suffice to give plenty to all. But ages must elapse before that true millennium arrives.

What does duty prescribe for the present world of Inequality? What is your part in it? You know what it is already to dread the want of labour; and some of you, no doubt, experience its actual want. Two years may produce a great change in this country. Ten years an effectual one. Recent events in neighbouring nations foreshow a more rapid advance in freedom than our fathers ever knew. And with the demand for political freedom there is now combined a new,—and to you,—a more important demand. If there were no better reason to give, why not reject your purposes of marrying till you see what answer is secured for that demand?

But, suppose the evils of bad legislation, and of faulty industrial systems, are likely to last to the end of this century, all experience will show you that you are likely to gain by avoiding early marriages. By such labour as you can obtain, you may, perhaps, be able, to save a little for housekeeping by the time you are thirty. And why marry earlier? You will be, or ought to be, wiser by that time; you will be better able to govern a family, from knowledge of yourselves and the practice of self-discipline; you will have acquired some years' knowledge of your wife's disposition—for the wisest men are guilty of folly (witness even Milton!) when they marry on

slight acquaintance ; and your increased knowledge of the world will enable you to encounter augmented cares with strength for bearing them, in defiance of the difficulties it may raise in your way ; while the direction you will be able to impart to your children will be better worth their receiving.

Above all, you need *years for the cultivation of your minds*, to render yourselves *free* and happy citizens of an enlightened country,—such as I fervently hope every young English working man may become in a few years. This is the cogent reason why you should remain single. To share, as a true and affectionate husband ought to share, the cares of his wife, and of a young family, most fearfully cuts off prospects of great mental improvement for a working man. Your law-and-tax-makers have not facilitated your education. If you were at school when children, you learnt little there that you feel you ought to know now ; and the great work of self-culture is necessary. I purpose, most respectfully to say a little in a future letter on the plans and subjects of study, which I think deserving attention ; but I have, first, a little more to say on morals and habits.

I observed before, that to rise morally, it was necessary that our order should display a determination to shun all the vices of every class, but especially the vices of oppressors.

Disdain, then, to murder time and to murder

moral principle, by card-playing, or gaming of any description. A man ought to be ashamed to claim the attribute of real intelligence who plays at cards. Shuffling bits of dirty pasteboard with black and red spots on them—for precious hours!—hours that can never be recalled! What, is there no golden volume to read—no science to learn—no language to acquire—no kindred mind within reach, with whom to converse—no chapter of the human heart to study—no health to be gained even by a solitary walk—no book of Nature to read—nothing sensible, or worthy of a human being to be done? Are you driven to this most drivelling of all idiotisms, in order to render life less burthensome? And then, the ill-temper, the sordid feeling, and other evils it often fosters. Let the titled, who fatten on your toil, and yawn for very weariness of idle ease and pleasure, and who would often give pounds for the invention of a new pleasure while hundreds are famishing, play at filthy cards;—but do not *you* so degrade yourselves.

The increasing passion for dancing, among you, is, to me, very grievous. How will you fill your brains by dangling your heels? I shall be told it is necessary for health, in closely pent-up cities. I am sorry, if it be; but, for the life of me, I cannot understand how it can contribute to health to work yourselves into a heat for prolonged hours, and go home in the cold air after midnight, and that so

much wearied that your limbs are stiff the next morning. It is a lame excuse for an idle and frivolous and time-consuming and brain-robbing custom. The moral standard of England will not be raised by each of your order excelling Taglioni in graceful agility, if you could attain such perfection. Away from it, working men, if you mean to rise to the moral dignity which will render it impossible to keep you virtual bondsmen.

Scorn, also, to imitate the titled oppressors in the fondness they display for tinsel and false ornament. Be ashamed to wear a showy watchguard, or a gaudy shirt-pin, much more a ring,—on Sundays or holidays. Every such silly toy derogates from man's claim to sense. Be men—not *things*. Decent clothing, cleanliness, neatness, all become the working man. He has a right to be well clothed ; but he ought to leave it to suckling lords to play the fopling.

Intemperance,—though it is *not*, as some people say, the curse of your order, *peculiarly*,—shun, at its first approaches, as you would a serpent. Degrading as it is, its power is nevertheless insidious, and can scarcely be resisted when once yielded to ; nor without immense difficulty, broken, when it has once conquered the man.

I must not *moralise* further. I will only say, in conclusion—be true men, in every sense. Disdain to tell a lie, or to act one—for friend or foe—in

seriousness or in jest. Be thus the vanguard of your order in its moral march ; and the triumph of your freedom cannot long be delayed.

LETTER II.

“ For me the day
Hath duties which require the vigorous hand
Of stedfast application . . . let it pass !
The night’s my own : they cannot take my night ! ”
KIRKE WHITE.

MEN OF THE FUTURE,—To emulate the Men of the Past, in the acquirement of deep learning, is not a passion even with our university “ scholars ” of the present day, who permit themselves to be far outshone by the laborious students of Germany. It can scarcely, therefore, be expected that you,—who have no erudite teachers to instruct you, no large libraries at command, and no leisure, save the hours which you can spare from necessary labour or snatch from sleep—should generally distinguish yourselves by profound scholarship.

Not but that there have been artisans, even in the humblest ranks of Labour, who have won imperishable names for devoted perseverance in study, and for their noble triumphs over the most discouraging difficulties. And they of our order who are born with the precious gift of genius will continue to add to its triumphs, in spite of hardships, in defiance of all obstacles.

But, though we may fairly contend that the greater number of the greatest names of genius have belonged to the children of Labour,—yet, this precious gift is the inheritance of only the minority of any class ; and my present purpose (in fulfilling the promise I presumed to give,) is to assist, if possible, the majority of young working men, in the direction of their studies. They who are endowed with high genius will mark out their own path. I speak but to those who possess an average portion of intelligence : and shall, therefore, prescribe nothing that might deter or repulse them by its seeming abstruseness.

Let me commence by telling you, that experience has taught me how greatly some people err, by prescribing the same modes and the same kinds of study to every enquirer. Some minds which do not reach, in the compass of their powers, what would strictly be termed genius, are often found to excel in some particular line of mental pursuit, by fixed application, and by slow but sure progression. Others feel an unconquerable aversion to the rigid study of any single branch of science or literature ; and yet contrive to amass together an immense fund of rich and varied information. Industry distinguishes both classes of minds ; or, the man with the particular tendency would be but a groper after one idea which he never grasped, and the versatile man would remain through life a mere smatterer.

Resolve — application — energy — perseverance : these are the secrets of advancement in knowledge ; *not* the particular modes of study, or the particular books that may be read. Be resolved to learn something. That is the first requisite. Apply yourself to it with the spirit of an earnest man, and as if it were worth learning,—not playing at fast and loose with it,—sometimes advancing a little, then forgetting what you have learned, and then having to begin over again ; but persevering till you feel at home in your pursuit, and till you reach a point in your study, where every new light shed upon it by the progress of the age finds you prepared for its reception.

“I have no time for study,” is the silliest and most culpable excuse that any man can make for indolence and negligence. Every working man ought to be ashamed of it. If you have not time—make it from sleep, as I did. This is the language of a “plain speaker” ; but I hope you do not expect me to trifle with you.

There was a warrior in the classic times who could not sleep for thinking of the laurels of his rival. Think of the glorious names some men have won,—by the literary triumphs they have gained, by the grand discoveries they have made, by the pregnant truths they have heralded and diffused, by the world-wide good they have done ; and then, remembering that many of these were born among the lowly, had no other help than from themselves, and

had to trample down difficulties innumerable in their path to success,—sleep in indolence and negligence if you can.

But, remember, you will grow no wiser by sleeping—for knowledge does not often come in dreams ; while your health might suffer no material injury by occasionally cutting off an hour or two of slumber. Your time to make the experiment is *now*. In a few years it may be too late ; and, besides, the years you defer the work of self-culture must be years of comparative ignorance with you—and you ought to feel self-degraded by reflecting that self-neglect reduces you to that condition.

If I could use words of fire,—syllables of lightning,—they should be employed, if by such means I could arouse you to the noblest of all aspirations—that of becoming truly intelligent men.

Have you an inclination—I will not suppose you to have reached that state of the will which may be called a resolve—to know something of the mathematics ? What can prevent you, if your mind be constituted for such studies ? Have you greater hardships to endure than poor Gifford, whose cruel master took away from him pens and ink, pencils and slate, and reduced him to the necessity of secretly beating out pieces of leather, and working his questions in algebra upon them with the point of an awl ?

Do you think you could like—I will not suppose

you have reached a strong desire—to learn something of languages? What hinders you if there be a grain of ability in your mental organization? Are you subjected to greater deprivations, surrounded with deeper discouragements, than were Alexander Murray, Heyne, Carey,—or even Dr. Samuel Lee, once a lowly carpenter, and now (or until the last few weeks) a Regius Professor in the University of Cambridge, and acquainted with twenty languages?

Read the ‘Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties,’ published in three little shilling parts, by Charles Knight, and written by my intelligent acquaintance, Mr. Craik. If it does not rouse you to shake off the thralldom of indolence and irresolution, I know not what will. Compare your difficulties with those of the great host of noble spirits chronicled in these little volumes, and say if you ought to proclaim that intellectual advancement is for you “impossible”—a word which Napoleon said ought not to be in any vocabulary!

Neither be discouraged with a fear that you have not the constitution of mind fitted for the particular study to which you may feel even a slight inclination. *Try*: that is the magic word. The very inclination for any particular study is a good omen that you may excel in it.

For the mathematics, any shilling system of arithmetic will form an opening. Colenso’s Algebra, which is not a dear book, makes the analytical

arithmetic easy to the most average capacity ; and Simson's Euclid, which is to be had everywhere cheap, is so plain that it only requires *thought*—which if you are not willing to bestow, you can learn nothing. You need no teacher but your book ; and the triumphs of unassisted conquest are ever the most honourable, as well as gratifying.

For the languages, if you wish for soundness, not to say a plurality of knowledge in tongues, the Latin deserves your primary struggle. I know that it has become a fashion with innovators to decry this stately porch to the magnificent Greek—and even the all-perfect Greek itself—as not worth the labour of an attempt at entrance. But I have never known a skilful grammarian, in my life, who was ignorant of Latin ; and if there were no other reason for advising you to attempt learning it, I would say—try to learn Latin for the sake of the clear insight into the nature of grammar which it will give you.

A dictionary will help you to unlock the meaning of Eutropius with ease ; and his abbreviation of Roman history once mastered—Cæsar, Nepos, Virgil, and, successively, all the treasures of the majestic Roman tongue will lie open to—your perseverance. The Greek—the most beautiful and most valuable of all languages—will be an easy conquest, after you can begin to read a Latin classic.

If you must ask the tradesman's question—"What

use is it?" which really means "What can I gain by it?" and that too often in a sordid sense,—I answer, It will give you the key to unlock a grand treasury of thought—the most valuable riches to every man who does not pride himself on being merely an animal. Good translations may give you some of these riches; but there is a treasury of thought,—a new and elevated source of ideas, opened by the knowledge of a language, in itself. It resembles rather the acquirement of an additional mind, if I may so speak, than the mere reading of a new book, or of many books.

But, if the arduousness of this task affright you, and yet, you are disposed to attempt a language, the French is mere child's play. I mean the learning to read it—for which the commonest understanding and memory, possessed by any man who can read an English newspaper, will suffice. Grammars are abundant; but stout old Cobbett's is undoubtedly the plainest. The pronunciation *cannot* be learned, except from a native Frenchman, or one who has companied with the French people. "What use is it?" will not be asked about a living language, I hope.

And yet, if it should still be asked about this, or any other elementary knowledge; or, if you fear that people who think the only real business of life is to learn how to "get on," that is, how to get money—should scoff to find you employed in

endeavouring to advance your mind ; remember that their ridicule breaks no bones. Turn from their mistaken censure, and think how much real elevation you will lose by yielding to it ; how deeply you may regret neglecting your youthful opportunity, if you let it go by, and reach mature manhood without the knowledge you may then find possessed by others, in whose presence you may feel humbled and mortified. Remember that knowledge is no burthen, while ignorance is often an intolerable and oppressive life ; that knowledge once obtained, costs you nothing to keep, while ignorance may subject you to expense as long as you live. Imagine yourself the new and superior being you will be in ten years' time, with those ten years devoted to all the useful study your necessary labour and your health will permit ; and then imagine what will be your reflections in ten years' time, if you continue mentally indolent, and *then* remember what you *might have been*.

Do you feel resolved to be an intelligent man ? Lose not a moment in putting your resolve into practice. Prepare a blank book, write down your resolution ; and in that book, from time to time, register a brief record of your doings. Let there be something done every day. Whatever be the particular study you enter upon, be a *daily student*. Five minutes (ay, five minutes ! I know it well from the hard—but what I regard *now* as the glorious—

Past) may often be the full extent of time that you can look into a book during one day; for an unusual pressure of labour *must* be met, when it comes, by the poor working man. But, let not the precious five minutes be lost. I have often learned more in some such golden five minutes than in an hour at another season; and you will often have the same experience, if you become a serious and devoted student.

And the brief time allotted for meals—make that also a time for study. From fourteen I began to employ every meal-time in reading or study: book in one hand, and cup or saucer in the other at breakfast; and even at my humble dinner, if the book were one that must be held up, I could dispense with knife and fork, and use a spoon. Let none despise the lowly chronicle! None but a working man knows what the toiler has to struggle with. How often have I swooned, and fallen off my seat upon the floor, at the close of a long day's labour over the *last*,—having repeated my tasks in language over and over again during the day—been at work from six to ten—and having had three hours' reading and a walk on the hills and through the woods above Gainsborough, before I sat down to work at six in the morning.

Young working men, forgive my telling you this. I want to see you in earnest about your own mental advancement. I want you to elevate our order—

the order to which belonged the world's wonder, SHAKSPERE, the woolstapler's and butcher's son :— Ben Jonson, the bricklayer ; the “ learned ” Ben Jonson, as well as great dramatic poet :—and Burns, who “ followed his plough, in glory and in joy, along the mountain side.” I will not recall to your memory more of the thousand-fold list of glorious working men's names, now. It may form a theme of itself, some other time. Only begin to emulate them ; and that without delay.

I will say no more at present. In a future Letter you must permit me, if you please, to take up the topic of your general reading.

LETTER III.

“ Endeavour thus to live ; these rules regard ;
 These helps solicit ; and a steadfast seat
 Shall then be yours among the happy few
 Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal air—
 Sons of the morning.”

WORDSWORTH.

MEN OF THE FUTURE,—In books is registered all that remains of the wisdom of the Past, and all the general knowledge of the Present. There is, therefore, no means of becoming a well-informed man, except by reading. There can be no exception to the truth of this remark, unless for general travellers, who see society under varied forms, and

in many climes, and thus test human nature for themselves. But *you* have to labour for bread ; and, unless an irrepressible spirit of adventure be native to a man's constitution, it is not likely that he will venture to make the tour of Europe, depending on the chances of obtaining labour as a means of living, while he observes foreign manners.

The book—the book, must be your great resource. And what a world of enjoyment—what a never-failing solace in the midst of hardships—does *reading* open to you ! How eloquently true are these words of Sir John Herschel—the son of the great working man who discovered Georgium Sidus, with the telescope fashioned by his own hands !

“ Were I to pray for a taste which should stand me in stead under every variety of circumstances, and be a source of happiness and cheerfulness to me during life, and a shield against its ills, however things might go amiss and the world frown upon me, it would be a taste for reading. . . . Give a man this taste, and the means of gratifying it, and you can hardly fail of making him a happy man. . . . You place him in contact with the best society in every period of history,—with the wisest, the wittiest, the tenderest, the bravest, and the purest characters who have adorned humanity. You make him a denizen of all nations, a contemporary of all ages. The world has been created for him ”
(*Address on the opening of the Eton Library, 1833*).

No feeble words of mine can be necessary to enforce the truth thus admirably set forth, by one of the greatest living men of science. I *know* that it is felt by many of you. I only wish it were felt by all. Our enfranchisement would then become an immediate possession. For, never let it be forgotten that it is the *want of knowledge* among the millions which keeps us out of the possession of Freedom. Even the intelligent are prevented from breaking their bonds, by the unintelligent. Ponder on this, while at labour ; and you will see a depth of truth in it that will make your hearts burn to spread knowledge. All history will confirm it : you will, age after age, see the intelligent Few bursting their bonds—but in vain !—the unintelligent Many bring back slavery, more or less resembling the Past. “Knowledge is power” is the profoundest axiom of the profoundest English thinker : perhaps, it is the most profound saying ever uttered since mankind existed.

In my second letter, I observed that some “feel an unconquerable aversion to the rigid study of any single branch of science or literature, and yet contrive to amass together an immense fund of rich and varied information.” It is chiefly to this class of minds, among working men, that I now address myself. Our noble English tongue affords almost boundless materials for their taste : it is a mine of mental opulence that the longest life, even with com-

plete leisure, spent in reading, cannot exhaust. The only difficulty is to make selections.

First and foremost, let me say—SHAKSPERE should be the young Englishman's familiar acquaintance. You may mark off some five hundred authors in a book-catalogue, and if you were to read over all they ever wrote, they would not furnish you with a tithe of Shakspeare's wisdom. His knowledge of the human heart, his acquaintance with the laws of mind, are alike the source of wonder. The deepest thinkers discover the greatest riches in him. "The inexhaustible mine of virgin treasure in our Shakspeare" is a phrase of Coleridge—the greatest genius, scholar, and philosopher combined, of his own day. This is the summary of his testimony to Shakspeare's value :—

"I have been almost daily reading him since I was ten years old :—the thirty intervening years have been unintermittingly, and not fruitlessly, employed in the study of Greek, Latin, English, Italian, Spanish, and German,—and the last fifteen years, in addition, far more intensely, in the analysis of the laws of life and reason as they exist in man, —and upon every step I have made forward in taste, in acquisition of facts from history or my own observation, and in knowledge of the different laws of being and their apparent exceptions, from accidental collision of disturbing forces,—at every new accession of information, after every successful exer-

cise or meditation, and every fresh presentation of experience, I have unfailingly discovered a proportionate increase of wisdom and *intuition* in Shakspeare."

If Coleridge, after fifty-five years of refined training, found an author who lived two centuries before him always in advance of him on subjects which demand the greatest stretch of the human powers,—what must be the value of that author to working men who can never command a one-hundredth part of Coleridge's other means of instruction, nor a tenth part of his leisure for learning!

It will be replied by some, that Shakspeare has blots. True: and so has the sun,—but you must look through a piece of smoked glass to see them. Read him, working men,—read England's—the world's—*your* Shakspeare; and if the glory of his brightness does not make you forgetful of his 'blots'—your experience will be very different from that of any thinking man I have ever met.

You will not expect me to spend many syllables on other poets—though the theme would be tempting. In a word—next to Shakspeare, you cannot say that you are acquainted with the true standard of poetry unless you have companioned with the sublimity of Milton, the fervour of Byron, the feeling of Burns, the thought of Wordsworth, the beauty of Keats.

Prose fiction: you ought to be acquainted with

it ; but, to become "novel readers" in the common acceptation of the term—you ought to shun as you would dram-drinking, or taking opium. I have known people reduced to sheer imbecility by each of the three corrupting and ruinous habits ; and the novel-drunk imbeciles were the most imbecile. If the thirst for knowledge moves you to read, you will be jealous over yourselves, and not willingly read for excitement's sake. It is the knowledge of character you will find in Fielding, Smollett, Scott, and Dickens,—and not the exciting interest of their stories,—that will lead you to relieve an hour with their volumes, when overworn with labour, and unfit for sterner thought or study.

But sterner thought than that of poetry or prose fiction must employ your leisure, if you would turn it to solid account in acquiring the Knowledge which is Power. There is the mighty volume of Nature to be studied—that volume in which the learning of our times is a thousand times richer than all the ages preceding. Astronomy, Geology, Chemistry, Mechanics, Zoology; Botany,—of these, and all the branch sciences into which they are divided,—the books of our contemporaries contain treasures of experimental knowledge the value of which to mankind is beyond price, even now ; but only in the great Future, when all shall share the benefits of knowledge, will the full value of Science be known. The great tendency of the thought of

our age is to science ; and if you be ignorant of it, you can scarcely be said to belong to the age in which you live.

The nomenclature of all these sciences may be easily mastered,—and how cheaply ! William and Robert Chambers, in the three-halfpenny numbers of their ‘Information for the People,’ furnish you with it. In their recent issue, too, of this work, they have added an outline of all that is new in science,—while they point you to authorities who deal with their subjects more deeply. And even if the works they refer to are beyond your reach, when the technical terms of a science are mastered, and an outline of it is laid up in the mind, you can scarcely take up a newspaper, or a fugitive periodical, in this scientific age, without finding some fragment of information, which you can add to your stores of that species of knowledge.

Independent of the great practical uses of science, it is the elevation which some branches of it,—such as Astronomy,—give to the mind ; it is the reliance on fact, *and on fact only*, which it teaches the judgment, for which you ought to cleave to science with ardour. Science is transforming the world—it is leading us on to changes that will render the reign of the power of craft and force impossible. In it are concentrated our firmest hopes for universal human happiness ; and you must not, you cannot, unless you be faithless to yourselves, remain ignorant of Science.

And then, the Laws of Mind, with all the acute and curious discussions concerning them, from the time of the Greeks till now: no man who takes any pride in being esteemed a thinker, can remain ignorant of them. Let me entreat any of you who feel an aversion to rigid study, not to be impelled from opening a volume on Mental Philosophy by the prevalent notions, attached by superficial people, to the word 'Metaphysics.' None of you who have not made the experiment know what keen delight is to be reaped from a page of such inquiries. I need not profess to you that I feel rapture in conversing with the mind of Shakspeare or Milton; but I declare to you that I have often had far more ecstatic pleasure in a solitary hour at midnight devoted to Locke on the Understanding, or Jonathan Edwards on the Will,—and even to some inferior metaphysicians,—than I have enjoyed from any volume of poetry. In my humble opinion the range of that man's intellectual powers must be contracted, who can derive no intense pleasure from discussions on the very nature and laws of these powers.

I do not say that this species of inquiry can rank with physical science in practical value; and it would be absurd to say that metaphysical inquiries generally are attended with certainty—the grand charm of physical science. But, as a healthy exercise for the powers of the mind, an hour—if it be even an hour of battle—with Berkeley or Locke,

with Hume or Butler, with Hartley or Dugald Stewart, will be found of value, of incalculable value: strengthened by contest about the impalpable, the mind will be found stronger and of keener appetite when it turns to the real and practical.

Moral Philosophy is a realm of inquiry into which you can scarcely fail to be led, if you enter on a course of metaphysical reading. The doctrines of morals are intimately connected with religion, and, for reasons which must be evident to you, I shall here avoid all discussion on such subjects, simply observing that, as a moral teacher and *exemplar* I regard Christ as the highest and most worshipful. My views of *creeds* have altered, in the lapse of years, and with reflection; but ever since I was able to think, my opinion, in this respect, has remained unaltered. Yet, as I know that none of my order who have learned their alphabet are unacquainted with their New Testament,—I leave this weighty subject to the heart and mind of every reader—recommending it to his own unbiassed, unprejudiced, and most conscientious consideration.

A very important theme for *you*, young working men, remains to be treated. And feeling it to be so, I deem it necessary to treat it more largely. Poetry elevates and refines the man, and unfolds to him the resources of expression; Science brings us within the sympathies of the present, and even gives us some glimpses into the Future and mental Philo-

sophy sharpens the intellect and unfolds to us, at least, some of the laws of our own thoughts ; but *the Past*, and what mankind have thought and done in it, and *how* they caused the Present to be what it is—the busy and diversified, the exciting and instructive volume of *History* must be read to find the important solution of these pregnant questions. “Read history with the greatest attention,” says Locke, “for to be ignorant of what happened before one was born, is to be always a child.” A profound remark ; and, indeed, Locke could not pen a shallow one.

The key to the condition of society and of the individual man, *now*, is to be found in the record of the Past. History will show you how events have necessitated succeeding events—till it brings you to a comprehension of the result, the Present. And he who most fully understands how the Past has produced the Present, is most likely to foresee what kind of Future will arise.

The causes why the Many have been, through so many ages, and in all climes, subject to the Few ; the impediments to knowledge ; the sources of opinions which still divide the world ; these, and considerations of less importance—such as the allusions of poets, which often cannot be understood without history—make a knowledge of it imperatively necessary. It is here especially that you will find the fine remarks I have already quoted to be verified ; that you will be placed “in contact with the best

society, . . . with the wisest, the wittiest, the tenderest, the bravest, and the purest characters who have adorned humanity ” ; that each of you will be made “ a denizen of all nations, a contemporary of all ages.”

A plan is, above all things, necessary in reading history properly. I am talking to *young* men, and therefore consider them as having opportunity to carry it out, by perseverance,—even if a few years (of their very spare hours) be employed in so doing.

First, then, let me recommend you to read Plutarch's Lives. You will find the translation by the Langhorne easy of access (and you should not read an earlier translation). The interest of the portraits drawn by the biographer is indescribable. If you next take up the translation of Rollin's ‘ Ancient History,’ you will enter on it with the advantage of having, as one may say, a private acquaintance with each great character whom Rollin successively introduces on the historic stage.

I recommend the books to you which combine, in my humble opinion, real excellence with easiness of access. Some of you, no doubt, know that a revolution is taking place in the writing of history. Niebuhr, the great German scholar and thinker, has been to history what Bacon was to philosophy : he has set it on new foundations. A large part of ancient history is now considered to be mythical merely, and not fact. If Grote's magnificent ‘ History

of Greece' be within your reach, you will see this distinction made in the spirit of Niebuhr's philosophy. In Rollin you must make allowances for credulity ; but, at the same time, you must give the writer credit for relating his vast story as he found it related in the old writers.

Ferguson's 'History' of Rome may follow Rollin. It is not democratic in spirit, although it is the narrative of a republic ; but it is clear and orderly. Niebuhr's History is the grand work ; but having been only recently translated, it is dear and difficult to get hold of : a remark which, I am sorry to say, is also applicable to the excellent work of Dr. Arnold—the nearest approach to Niebuhr's, and even preferred to his, by some competent judges.

After Ferguson you will enter on the most superb treat you will ever experience in history,—the transcendent 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' by Gibbon. Critics differ in their estimate of his style ; but, with all its occasional exuberance, it is regarded as a most masterly adaptation to his subject. As a word-painting it is perfect—for all his figures live and move before you ; and the accuracy of his facts and critical knowledge have lately been tested by Guizot, who has gone laboriously over all his authorities.

Let me here recommend you, however (and in the instance of Gibbon *alone*), to lay down the book at the end of the 14th chapter, and to read the three

first centuries of Neander's 'Ecclesiastical History.' Remember, you are now crossing the great Bridge which connects Ancient and Modern History—(for such is the valuable work Gibbon has performed for mankind)—and you must perform the passage with all circumspection. The history of the Church colours all that follows in Europe, and you *must* be acquainted with it. Taking up the 'Decline and Fall' again, at the 15th chapter, take care to read Neander, thenceforth, as nearly as possible, century for century, with Gibbon, till you come to the end of his work—when you will be left to finish Neander or to read the remainder at some other time. There is even another divergence which you will find of advantage,—namely, when you have come to the splendid chapter in which Gibbon enters on the history of Mahomet, procure, if possible, Sale's translation of the Koran, and read over the very learned and interesting 'Preliminary Discourse' of the translator. It will give an increased zest to your perusal of Gibbon, as well as prepare you for a finer appreciation of the philosophy of his highly-written chapter. I might have recommended other divergencies, but I am indisposed to bewilder you. What I *have* recommended, let me entreat you to observe.

You will now be prepared for the history of your own, or any other modern country.

We have, now, a really good History of England: Mr. Green's. We have, besides, the works of Free-

man, Macaulay, Froude, and others, who, in various styles of excellence, have produced histories of different periods of our History—but none of them have given us a complete History.

Prescott's Histories of Mexico and Peru, Motley's Dutch Republic, D'Aubigne's 'History of the Reformation,' are all excellent books, and so is Hallam on the 'Middle Ages'—though some may call it antiquated.

The most important portions of modern history to us, are the history of our own Commonwealth, and that of the French Revolution. Mr. Carlyle's 'French Revolution' you are sure to read ; but also read Thiers' ; and Lamartine's 'Girondists.' John Forster's 'Lives of Eliot, Hampden, Pym,' etc., must be read, in order to get a thorough understanding of our great Commonwealth period ; and your reading will not be complete unless you read Mr. Carlyle's 'Letters of Oliver Cromwell.'

I might have mentioned fifty other books of high value ; but the perusal of those which I have mentioned will furnish you with their names ; and if time and opportunity permit, you can extend the catalogue for yourselves practically.

Methods for arranging your knowledge, for classifying it, and securing it, as you proceed, so as to make it available for life, I will endeavour to suggest in a future letter.

LETTER IV.

" Child of a nobler chivalry
 Than e'er was known by devotee
 Who bore the Cross to Palestine,—
 Would'st thou make the victory thine ?
 The battle must with skill be fought :
 The close-knit panoply of Thought
 Thou must calmly, bravely don :—
 Youthful soldier, gird it on ! "

MEN OF THE FUTURE,—The digestion and arrangement of your knowledge, it must be evident to you, should be carefully attended to, while you are searching for facts, and collecting the materials of information. It is possible for a man to be a laborious reader, and yet to be unable to bring forth his knowledge for the enlightenment of others,—through want of a clear arrangement of it, in his own mind. Such a man's brain resembles a bag, well filled it may be, but wherein the material contents are jumbled and shaken together,—so that nothing can be found when it is wanted ; or if it be readily found, it is by mere chance of its being shaken out first.

Solid knowledge is only to be gained by the practice of making written notes,—I do not mean of every book that you read ; but of such volumes as contain a clear development of some particular branch of science, a distinct and judicious record of some important period of history, or a logical

disquisition on some great questions in morals or criticism.

Do not be startled with the apparent difficulty of accomplishing these labours. I remember that your leisure hours are few ; but I am recommending what I have proved, by experience, to be practicable for young working men. A *note-book* is of the first value to you. Do not make extracts upon loose scraps of paper. That was my error, before I was twenty ; and then, feeling restless until I had arranged and systematised these fragments, I began to enter them in a volume—but to transcribe the multifarious pile was too much for patience. Have a *note-book*, though it may cost you a few shillings : fill it up, regularly ; and form your index to it, as you go on. The occasional writing will be a relief to three or four hours' close reading ; and a valuable thought, once entered into your book, will be a treasure for life.

I recommend *one* general note-book to you, because I am sure you will find it much more serviceable and convenient than several note-books. When a young man discovers his own great blame, in having trifled away precious time, and awakes, with something like a passion, to the determination of having solid knowledge, he is in danger of systematising too far. I felt all this, about twenty-one ; for although I had not trifled as some trifle,—I felt that I had been very blamable in squandering

many precious hours wherein rich knowledge might have been gathered. Not satisfied with the *one* note-book, I began to form sectional books, for theological extracts, scientific extracts, philological extracts, and so on. But the systematising faculty once awakened, there was no end to the desire of rearrangement;—till I clearly saw that the *one* general note-book, *with its regular index*, was, after all, the best thing I could have.

There are some books, however, which it would not satisfy you to have read, and culled for a few extracts. You will feel the necessity of performing a greater labour upon them : I mean, if your minds be really and earnestly intent on attaining perfect knowledge—or, at least, skill—in some particular department of inquiry. It will depend on the bent of particular minds to determine what books these may be ; but an *analysis*—do not be alarmed at the word—of some books must be performed.

One of the books which I *analysed by writing*, most perfectly, when about twenty-one, was Dr. Blair's 'Lectures on Rhetoric and the Belles Lettres.' It contains rules for composition, critical remarks on the style and taste and genius of the most celebrated writers, and, in brief, a complete introduction to the art and mystery of expressing thought in language. Better books than Dr. Blair's—for aught I know—may have been published ; but I have read none of the more modern works on 'Elocution,' 'Style,'

and so on. I have taken them up, and glanced over them; but seeing nothing new or profound in them, I have not thought it necessary to read them through. And I question whether any of you, if you perform for yourselves what I did, with Blair, will ever think it necessary to read slight works on taste and style, afterwards. From the time that the true principles of taste and style are distinctly and fully seated in your mind, you will go on to form your own judgments on whatever you read, and to do this with confidence.

My analysis was written on common letter-paper doubled, so that each sheet formed eight pages,—which I found to be a convenient form for reading afterwards. It extended, as well as I remember, to fifty or sixty pages, and contained every rule given by Blair for the judgment of style, and every description of the figures of rhetoric, with the chief examples,—but all compressed into the smallest compass, so that every subject might be viewed rapidly, presented at once to the mind. Some seven or eight years after it was written, I gave this analysis away to a young man; but I am sure it would do him little good,—because it was not the work of his own brain after reading Blair's text.

Another labour of this kind which I performed about the same period, was an analysis of Dr. Samuel Clarke's famous 'Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God.' I do not think so highly of

this work as I did then ; but, presenting, as it does, the most perfect display of the *à priori* argument for a Deity, it not only put me in possession of the strongest reasonings on this important subject, but it was a grand training in logic. With Chancellor King's ' Inquiry into the Doctrines of the Primitive Christian Church,' I performed a similar labour ;—and, whatever modifications my opinions have since undergone, I reckon none of these labours to have been valueless.

Could I realise Byron's fervid wish, ' Give me my youth again !' I would begin, much sooner, with a labour I entered upon much later—that of drawing up a chronology of History. To make this fully available to the memory, it should not be a mere list of dates, with some notable battle, birth or death of a remarkable person, or important political transaction affixed to the year. Ages, rather than years, should be numbered ; they should be characterised by their respective development of ideas ; and the names of the great men who figured in them, should be associated in the mind. The ages, thus chronologised, would be of very disproportionate lengths : the Mythical Age of Greece, for instance, would comprise hundreds of years,—while the Age of Pericles would comprise but a few. The importance of its deeds, the advancement of its civilisation, and the greater splendour of its leading characters,—would often, however, direct you to the propriety

of singling out a comparatively short period, and classing it as an Age in your chronology, and consequently, in your mind. I know nothing that can be thought of greater importance than your obtaining this clearly-defined knowledge of history—so as to enable you to say, at once, who lived in such an age, and what distinguished such an age, in any country.

I refrain from prescribing other subjects for your labour of analysis. They must be determined, as I observed before, by the bent of different minds. Once begun, this kind of labour will grow into a keen delight. You will feel that you have mastered what was before so imperfectly possessed. You will bear the knowledge about with you, and be able, easily, to summon it forth for practical use ; while an occasional lapse of memory can be readily supplied by a reference to your written notes.

And now, how glowing will be the sense of a new power which you will be conscious of attaining—that of expressing ideas correctly, forcibly, gracefully. Your analysis of other men's thoughts and systems cannot fail to give you this power ; and you will feel yourselves impelled, almost irresistibly, to the composition of independent essays on favourite subjects of thought. Even if these should never see the light, in the form of fugitive articles in any of the numerous cheap periodicals of our time, they will often be reverted to, in your meditative hours, and

read with pleasure,—or, perhaps, with a consciousness of your mental growth since the period at which they were penned.

Examples of the Essay, as a distinct form of writing, abound in our language,—from the stately and majestic compositions of Lord Bacon (a little volume which contains greater riches of thought than any book of English prose, that could be named); —to the clear and graceful sentences of Addison, in the *Spectator*;—and the homely and unadorned Mother English of Cobbett. Let none of these be neglected, when they come in your way: indeed, Bacon should be possessed by you, and read and re-read by you. His wisdom was even more profound than Shakspeare's: his name is second in English literature, only because his powers were less versatile than those of our incomparable dramatist.

Some of you will think I have prescribed what it is beyond the power of working men to accomplish. If you think so, try, at least, to compass as much of it as you can. But do not, I conjure you, yield to these weak and cowardly fears of your own ability. You have no conception of what you can do, till you can enter earnestly and devotedly upon a trial. Think of the hours you have mis-spent in trifling,—the years that have rolled away without solid advancement in knowledge. Be resolved that the Future, with you, shall not be like the Past. Three—five—seven—even ten years may remain to some

of you, to be devoted to diligent study, before the season arrives when you must mix with the deeper cares of life. Think of how much you can do in these years ; and resolve you will do it.

Let me, now, turn to a subject on which I feel increasing anxiety—the formation of a large and effective band of public speakers and teachers, for my own order. The want of these is our greatest want. At present books are doing all, or nearly all, that is effectually done for us. The speakers who, for some years past, have been most cordially received by working men, were unable to help forward the great work of intellectual regeneration and advancement. They possessed no stores of reading : they were not men of cultivated minds. Oppression had girt them up to political antagonism ; and they went forth to rouse their order and to speak out its mind against class-tyranny. Their history will make an important chapter, one day, in the political and social chronicle of Britain ; but this will only be when Time has taught the thinker to excuse their errors, from a consideration of their wrongs, and their deep sense of those wrongs.

No fact in the modern history of the working classes is more to be regretted than the desertion of them by the more intellectual of their order. I do not mean that these, in every instance, deserted the interests of working men ; but that they suffered themselves to be repulsed and beaten off from teach-

ing their own order, by the violence of a few who were mis-led and mis-taught; and offered their talents to the middle classes. Some of them, doubtless, have done good service in that direction. But, too often, they have contracted a conventional smoothness which unfits them to return to the teaching of working men; and which has had a worse tendency—the creation of a belief among the suffering and oppressed that these now ‘respectable’ orators never were heartily attached to the ranks from which they sprung.

If, when spurned and reviled by the mis-taught few, they had sought other audiences of their own order, they might have created a new and powerful, because more moral agency, for winning the enfranchisement of the toiling classes than any that has hitherto existed. I aim to inspire some of you with the resolve to train yourselves so as to be able to create this new agency. The latent faculty of the orator often exists where neither the possessor nor any of his young acquaintances suspect it to dwell. First attempts at speech-making, even in a limited circle, much more in an enlarged one, are, proverbially, frequent failures.

There is but one effectual preparation for all young men who yearn to become real instructors by public speaking—that of writing out their thoughts, and committing the main body of the writing to memory. I own, I have known some ‘popular’ speakers who

never, in their lives, made this preparation ; but I must declare that I wondered how they became popular,—seeing that what they uttered might rather be called sounds than thoughts. Sounds, too, of a somewhat wearisome monotony : there was so little change of words,—so bald and barren a uniformity of phrases.

Let me recommend to every young working man who has never ‘spoken in public,’—to use the common phrase,—but feels desirous of devoting himself, wholly or in part, to the instruction of his order, to form, at first, an association with a few select spirits who are intent on the same purpose,—that they may assemble weekly as a ‘Mutual Improvement Society,’ or Discussion Club. Such was my beginning, when about sixteen years of age ; and I must be forgiven, if you please, for offering advice as taught by experience ; because I feel more sure of being right, while so doing, than I could if I were to counsel you upon theory.

In the little society to which I refer, and which was formed at Gainsborough, in Lincolnshire, we discussed such questions as ‘Which is the best of our kings since the Norman Conquest, and which the worst?’ ‘Is Astronomy or Geography the more important science?’ ‘Is the miser or the spendthrift the more pernicious member of society?’ I might record twenty other questions which remain, pleasingly associated, in my memory. I only

mention these, to show that we chose subjects which could be discussed with some certainty of coming to a correct conclusion. In another little association which I joined about twenty, we entered on questions of a profounder nature, chiefly in theology and metaphysics. In both societies, we took the chair by routine, and not by election. The chairman of one week, at the close of the night's discussion, produced three questions to the meeting, of which one was selected ; and he himself opened the debate, the following week. This was our most essential rule ; for it did not leave both question and discussion to chance.

Either the reading of a *written essay* on the question, or a speech was permitted to every member. *I almost invariably wrote, and read, my essay ;* and the consequence was, the gradual formation of a style, and a consciousness of facility and copiousness of expression, compared with the members who always spoke extemporaneously. I recommend the same to you ; and am certain you will prove the benefit of it.

When some period has been passed in a preparatory school of this kind, you can try your skill in the delivery of an oration at some of the numerous institutions which now abound. But do not *read* your essay there. Rather have every syllable you propose uttering committed to memory, and deliver it by rote—if you fear to fail—than *lecture*, that is,

read, before an audience which is assembled to hear, and not to discuss. No man who reads a discourse to an audience can make a due impression on their minds and hearts.

A good field of exercise will be opened to many of you, in some of our numerous Literary and Mechanics' Institutions. Repetitions of a discourse are not possible there; and the healthful demand upon your thinking powers will be great.

My humble concluding advice shall be grounded, again, on experience. Persevere with writing out your discourse *entire* until you acquire a consciousness of power to talk freely and effectively, with only a *part* of your oration prepared in writing, and fixed in the mind by reading it over repeatedly. The *peroration* or winding-up of a discourse (and which is called 'the application' among the preachers), I found to be the first preparation in writing that I could lay aside. When the main body of a discourse has been successfully gone through, a speaker, tolerably well practised, easily finds utterance to enforce what he has pleaded. Next, I found it possible to express myself with facility in the main body of a discourse—so long as I took care to sketch out the chief points of an argument, and to collect the facts to support it. But it was long before I was satisfied to omit the preparation of a written *exordium* (or 'introduction,' as it is termed in the pulpit), and to fix it, almost word for word, in my memory.

Let it encourage you, however, to learn, that thought and practice at length enable a public speaker to appear at his post without trepidation, when *all* written preparation has been abandoned. He may, now and then, resort to it ; especially when grappling with some new difficulty in thought, and feeling the necessity of simplifying his propositions so that all who hear him may understand him. But, with the mind trained through years, stored through laborious hours or nights of reading, and the tongue practised in forms of expression,—all becomes easy ; and a man whose heart is in his work deserts his arm-chair, in a moment, to address ‘winged words’ to thousands, feeling the highest ecstasy in the fervid outpouring of his heart and intellect.

Such a man many of you may become. Aspire to it—for the ambition is noble. Read, think, devise, and act ! Look around on the sufferings of your order. Remember that their woes can never be permanently assuaged till Knowledge is diffused. Be not content to live merely to perform your manual labour, to get a scanty recompense, to eat and drink, to sleep,—and then to rise to-morrow to pursue the same dull round : a round of stagnant thought, of sterile existence. ‘Be *each* a soldier in the strife.’ Let the band of moral champions for Progress and Enfranchisement be multiplied by each of you *trying* to do something in the struggle ; and out of the trial there cannot fail to come—victory.

LETTER V.

“Tell out thy heart with truth, and be no ape
Of other men’s perfection in the grace
Of speech. Who speaketh from the heart, will reach
The heart. That citadel once gained, the man,
The crowd, obey their helmsman, who thus guides
The bark of human purposes to port.”

OLD DRAMA.

MEN OF THE FUTURE,—I am gratified to learn, by many letters, as well as some conversations with young men, that my humble exhortations to you have not been fruitless ; and that a fervid desire is growing up among you, not only to perfect your own knowledge, but to be instrumental in teaching others. I am earnestly asked to describe more at large the parts or divisions of a public address,—to give rules for its composition,—and, what is still more difficult, for its delivery. Let it be understood that in endeavouring to comply with these requests, I am only affording you the imperfect judgment and taste of an individual. What I may say will be found to differ with the judgment and taste, more or less, of others, it may be of deeper discernment and more perfect taste than myself. You will regard what I say as the simple fruit of reflection and experience ; and not as dictation, but as friendly advice.

First, of the parts or divisions of a public address, or oration. In some works on Rhetoric, you will find these minutely separated into many. I think

three terms are sufficient for describing them : the exordium—the subject—the peroration.

1. The *exordium*, or introduction, is so necessary a part of an oration, that no skilful speaker ever omits it. The resources of a man's mind are more fully discovered by his introduction than by any other part of his speech. A commonplace mind displays no skill in the construction of an exordium. He seems to begin as a matter of course, and to get into his subject as well as he can ; and the consequence is that his audience becomes wearied, before he has uttered half-a-dozen sentences. A question, an anecdote, a striking saying,—either his own, or the axiomatic remark of some great intellect,—such are the resources of the real orator, to awaken and fix attention, from the commencement. Very often, the wonder or curiosity of his hearers is raised to learn how he will make the beginning wind into the subject ; and at other times it seems to plunge them into its depths and difficulties at once, and they are engrossed with its importance, from the first sentence, and become eager to accompany him into an entire sifting of its perplexities. An audience, however, is always sensitive under an exordium which is too startling ; and an experienced speaker takes care not to excite expectation too much. He finds it best to be *natural*, above all, in his opening sentences. Gesture is almost always avoided, in an opening, by the best speakers : however striking are

their first sentences, they do not 'stretch forth the hand'—but let them fall on the mind by their own weight and vigour.

The length of an exordium cannot be prescribed by fixed rule; but must be determined by the nature of the subject. It looks poverty-stricken in thought to have short introductions, perpetually; but the demand that must be made upon the time of an audience, while treating some pregnant subjects, requires that the exordium be curtailed. On the other hand, a long introduction is often employed, by an adept in speaking, to clear up the treatment of the subject, by dismissing some points that would otherwise encumber it.

Figure and embellishment may often be used with great effect in an introduction. Mellifluous sentences uttered during the first ten or fifteen minutes of a discourse, win the ear, like an overture, in music. A speaker whose highest aim is to instruct, rather than please, will condescend to use them, in his introduction. I do not mean that musical sentences are to be despised, at any time, or in any part of a discourse; but *strength* is the great quality of speech to be cultivated. To be harmonious, or even pretty, in his phrases, is pleasing in a speaker; but he must wield *force* to produce great effects—and this can only be displayed in terse, vigorous periods.

2. The *subject* or main body of a public discourse, should have two attributes; clearness and fulness.

If some question in morals or metaphysics be treated, clearness is, above all, necessary,—for argument must be largely resorted to. If the discourse be upon science, fulness is more requisite. If the theme be history, biography, or politics, a clear and, so far as time will allow, a full statement of facts—often in chronological order—will be absolutely necessary. In the latter case, the memory must be stored ; for it looks lame or lazy to refer to dates upon paper. He who aims to be a workman worthy of his profession, will never condescend to take out papers, however small, to assist his memory. He had better run the risk (*if unavoidable*, and only then) of being a little inaccurate, than resort to memorandums : he will lose less by it, in the estimation of his audience. A young orator should most resolutely determine, while making his preparations, not simply to store his facts well up in the memory,—but to endeavour to recite them without inflicting weariness on his hearers. No matter how dull and prosily an historian may relate an event, Genius can dress it up—group its figures as in a picture—breathe upon them, and give them life. Some brief reflection, too, or pithy remark, should be skilfully thrown in, occasionally, to relieve the narrative,—if the discourse be historical. Yet these should not seem far-fetched. It is better to give the graphic narrative simply, than to mar it with conceits. Never mind the hypercritics who say you have ‘no philosophy,’

and can only relate what you have read. The people want more of these relations of what you have read. It is the teaching from fact which is most needed. If the people are to be trained to read, you must tell them what there is in books. Declamation has too long constituted the stock-in-trade of public speakers ; and that is the cause why the people have profited so little by it.

Examples of perseverance, self-sacrifice, honour, uprightness, heroism, patriotism, philanthropy, and all true nobleness—how do they abound in biography and history ! Can the people have better subjects for reflection than the sayings and doings of the great and good ? Is not the bare recital of such themes calculated to produce more healthy thought in them, than all the vapid declamation which is esteemed so *original* in some talkers ? And how easy it is for young speakers to get up a discourse upon such subjects ! This great and useful business of public speech has been too long represented as a mystery : a something which only the most ‘highly-gifted,’ as they are called, could possibly perform with any chance of success. It has been supposed it must ‘all come out of a man’s own head,’ or ‘he must have a head like an almanac,’ as they say in old Lincolnshire—to be a public speaker. Believe me, there is no inspiration about it. *Read and think*—that is the whole secret. Even deficiencies in voice and utterance may be remedied by practice.

Remember, Demosthenes is said to have been compelled to talk with pebbles in his mouth to cure a shuffle in his speech ; and to shout to the roaring waves, to strengthen his puny voice—and what did he not become ! Who has equalled him ?

Even when treating poetry, it is better to treat of the *life* of the poet, as the basis of the theme. All great poets of whose lives we know anything, have had deeply eventful lives. They were all great wrestlers with men and things : had all to sound the depths of sorrow, or to join in the stern combat with opposition, pride and tyranny, or malice, or to experience the pangs of neglect and disappointment. What fruitful themes for reflection—for appeals to the heart of the listener ! Specimens of poetry, let me observe, should *always* be recited. I have never known but one person who could enchain the attention of an audience by *reading* poetry—my excellent friend, W. J. Fox ; but then *his* reading is perfect music. An imperfect reciter always pleases more than even a tolerable reader. .

Neither is the possession of the first poetry, in the memory, a treasure to be despised. I regard my committing to memory of the first three books of ‘Paradise Lost,’ of the whole play of ‘Hamlet,’ and of some thousands of lines of Byron, Burns, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Scott, Keats, etc., at twenty-one, as my best helps to the riches of language, and the fit placing of words. The frequent repetition of these,

while I sat at work, not only watered the dryness of the repetition of Latin verbs, and so on, but it inevitably led to reflection on the *reason* why one word was employed in lieu of another. If a man wants a rich English vocabulary, he can find it in Milton and Shakspeare—or nowhere. Do not complain of leanness of language, young men: commit the masters of the language to memory—not by niggardly patches, but by large portions. “This, like everything else you recommend to us, requires time and labour”—you will reply. Just so: can you expect to acquire mental, any more than sordid, riches—by idleness, or indulgence in sleep, or trifling?

But I am wandering away from the ‘subject’: another word or two, and I will leave it. Orderly arrangement for the eye, of dates, or facts, assists the memory a great deal. You will find the eye, even while you are delivering your subject, going down a leaf, to a certain place, for a fact or date. So much does the memory depend on locality. Just as you remember the position upon a page where you found a particular remark in a book. *Never destroy, or copy into another form*, your list of dates or facts—unless you mean to lose the remembrance of what it contained.

3. The *peroration*, or winding-up of a discourse, must be anxiously provided for by the young orator—if he wishes to fasten what he has set forth in

'the subject' upon the mind. It must not, therefore be lifeless. Warmth, vigour, intensity, must be employed. Beware, however, of rant, and turgid and unmeaning phrases. Rather seek to get *deeper hold* of the heart and mind, up to the last moment—than to excite. The *appeal to duty* should now be the great theme. Let not your audience leave you without the feeling that they have something to do. Strive to make the idler and trifler leave the room with a sense of self-blame and uneasiness—but not without hope. But remember, if you be idle and trifling yourself, you cannot do this with any true effect. Let there be a moral aim in your peroration. But you cannot enforce this, or attempt to enforce it, without being conscience-stricken, if you be immoral yourself. How closely must the life of the successful teacher blend with his teachings, or his conscious hypocrisy will destroy his vigour, and render him unnatural! And if he come often before the same audience, they will soon see through his affectation, and his teachings will become useless.

The peroration you will find to be the first part of a discourse, the writing out of which you can dispense with. In the course of years, the mind learns to glance back quickly over 'the subject,'—to recall its chief points and press them vividly on the attention of an audience,—and to draw matter of earnest exhortation from the whole, combining it

with applications to the particular time, place, or circumstances of the hearers. The real power of a man's energy and enthusiasm is displayed, if he have any, in his peroration ; his understanding, reason, and memory, in his ' subject ' ; and his invention, in his exordium.

With some reluctance, I add a few words on the *delivery* of a public discourse. My first advice is—be yourselves, and not imitators. You had better lack some graces, than borrow those which will look *ungraceful* in you. The daw, you know, was a seemingly, though sober-coloured bird, in her own feathers ; but when she borrowed the peacock's plumes, all the crowd of birds pecked at her. To be any man's ape, however great he be, can only be apish. Sooner or later, imitation brings a man into derision, and then into neglect. Remember that *all* truly great men were *themselves*. Look at the individuality of every celebrated man. Who was Shakspeare's model ? By whom did Milton, Burns, Byron, or Shelley form themselves ? They *looked* at models, ay, and that intensely ; but their own strength would not permit them to be imitators.

So it is in oratory. Every sensible man is eager to see and hear the pattern men of the day : but he does not try to imitate them. The pattern men are no imitators—or they would cease to be pattern men. Who does W. J. Fox imitate ? No one. He is utterly unlike any other living speaker ; and is the

most polished, and, perhaps, the most perfect of them all. But if we hear any one, in London, affect to imitate his modulations, or the march of his sentences—there is a laugh at the imitator, as a man who dare not walk on his own legs. People talk of George Dawson as an imitator of Thomas Carlyle. Nothing can be more ridiculously untrue. The massive strength of Mr. Carlyle's conversation and thought is utterly distinct from the perpetual succession of brilliant points in the oratory of Mr. Dawson. I know no two men more unlike. I hold Dawson to be as thoroughly original in his oratory as any public speaker I ever heard. If he had been an imitator, the name of so young a man would not have been noised through England.

"What action do I recommend?" is a question put by several. I answer again—be yourselves—be natural. If any general rule can be given, it is that you should never begin with action, and should restrain it all the way through, rather than cultivate it. It will depend much on your temperament whether you can use it with success. In some parts of 'the subject,' but especially in the peroration, action is not only admissible—but what some people would think an approach to storm may occasionally be tolerated. Passion may often have its way, and with great grace, in the latter part of a discourse; but be *rational* when you begin; it is only an auctioneer orator who tears away from the beginning,

and always seems to cry 'going, going,' with a threat of his outstretched arm, like a hammer.

I must confess, I am old-fashioned enough to admire good action in oratory ; but it is not often beheld—indeed the two remarkable living men I have mentioned, use little action of any kind. And yet Demosthenes was *great* by action ; but it was *greater* in Pericles to fold his hands in his cloak, and still strike the people with awe, "like Jove with his thunderbolts," as saith, magniloquently, Walter Savage Landor.

LETTER VI.

"Let us read with method, and propose to ourselves an end to which all our studies may point. The use of our reading is to aid us in thinking."—GIBBON.

MEN OF THE FUTURE,—Being assured, by many letters, as well as various conversations, that a goodly number of you have entered diligently on the course of historical reading I presumed to recommend to you, some months ago,—I now beg to introduce to your notice the names of a few books in miscellaneous literature, which will be found to be greatly beneficial to you.

The love and contemplation of Nature, are rich sources of happiness. As a help for creating these healthful habits of the mind, I know no book like White's 'Natural History of Selborne.' Those of

you who may not have read this unpretending volume, little know what a gem of a book it is. Yet you must not expect sentiment in it. It is a simple record of minute facts and observations on birds, flowers, and, in short, on the commonest appearances in the natural world ; but it is highly suggestive, and never fails to induce inquiry and reflection ; and, thence, to lead the mind to the cultivation of cheerfulness. Every young working man should read this book. It will lead the dweller in a populous city out into the country, where his mind and body will, at once, derive health ; and to the country resident it will open up sources of intelligent and quiet enjoyment which, for lack of reading it, he might have failed to perceive were within his reach. Walton's 'Angler,' is usually classed with White's 'Selborne.' It is not so unexceptionable in excellence ; but no devoted reader will remain unacquainted with it. I write but mere hints ; and have no room for enlarged commendatory descriptions. Suffice it to say, that these books must not be judged by their titles. They contain a world of worth which must be proved to be properly estimated.

Should the reader feel indisposed to seek delight in the quiet path of contemplation, to which books, like these, are valuable helps, he can have no objection to receive delight and instruction from the more stirring narratives of travellers. No novel or

romance unfolds such powerful excitement as books of travel. The escape of Clapperton, naked, from his pursuers in the heart of Africa ; the opening of the Tombs of the Kings by Belzoni ; and fifty other equally exciting narratives of reality might be instanced, as far out-rivalling the highly-wrought descriptions of merely imaginary writers. Bruce, Mungo Park, Richardson, Rae Wilson, Stephens,—in a word, any describer of his adventures in Africa or Egypt, will be read with interest. Borrow's 'Bible in Spain,' and 'Gypsies in Spain' ; Lamartine's 'Pilgrimage to the Holy Land' ; Sir Francis Head's 'Rough Notes' ; Brydone's 'Tour in Sicily and Malta' ; Matthews's 'Diary of an Invalid' ; Davis's 'Sketches of China' ; Basil Hall's 'Loo-choo' ; may each be recommended as first-rate books of travel,—and are all within reach by subscribers to any ordinary library, while some of them are published in a very cheap form. I forbear to mention volumes which are less accessible ; but if I appeal to any young working man whose mental appetite is fully set on edge, he will do as I did when younger—seize on every volume of travels and voyages that comes in his way, be it modern or out of date ; and he will never find his time lost in reading it ; for every such volume will extend his knowledge of the world and of man.

So many books of this description have been published since the foregoing sentences were written,

that I must forbear to mention any of them ; for, in truth, I have found time to read but few of them.

Books which serve to create or direct a taste for Art, should also be read by young working men, whenever the opportunity offers. Among the works which I remember most gratefully, as having assisted me in this direction, when younger, are Lady Morgan's 'Life of Salvator Rosa' (one of the most eloquently-written books in the language); Benvenuto Cellini's 'Memoirs' (which Horace Walpole said was more interesting than any novel); and Sir Joshua Reynolds' 'Discourses' (more abstruse than either of the other two); and some descriptions of the galleries in England by Hazlitt, in the *London Magazine*. I know not whether Hazlitt's sketches were ever collected in a volume: they were among the most delightful things in the *best magazine*, for original articles, ever published in England;—for Charles Lamb, Allan Cunningham, Hazlitt, John Keats, John Clare, and others, were contributors to the *London*, in its palmy days,—and every number was hailed with eagerness; though Thomas Campbell was then editing the *New Monthly*, and Hogg, and 'Christopher North,' and 'Delta' were rendering each number of *Blackword* a rich literary treat.—I speak of threescore years ago.

The works of Disraeli the elder—especially his 'Curiosities of Literature,' 'Calamities of Authors,'

and ‘Quarrels of Authors,’—belong to the wholly miscellaneous class of books ; but working men, after making themselves acquainted with history and general literature, should avail themselves of an opportunity to read these valuable books. They contain the fruit of the reading of years, by one of the most diligent of readers ; and a variety of information may be collected from them that it would not, otherwise, be easy to obtain.

I shall only add a few words on another branch of literature, and then conclude the present letter. The most enlarged reading of history would be imperfect without biography. In fact, some biographies are great treatises of history in themselves—such are the ‘Lives’ of Plutarch ; such is Middleton’s ‘Life of Cicero,’ and such are Mr. Forster’s lives of the English Commonwealth men, which I have mentioned in a former paper. Any biography which throws a light upon history will, therefore, be eagerly read by the earnest student. But there is a distinct class of biographies which lay open the workings of the heart, and present the portraiture of their subject in such life-like colours, that we seem to be in his presence. Boswell’s ‘Life of Johnson’ stands first in this class ; and I should be inclined to place Moore’s ‘Life of Byron,’ and Lockhart’s ‘Life of Scott,’ immediately after it. While our language affords a few masterpieces of this class of writing, it is, however, singularly deficient in earnestly-written lives

of Howard, Bernard Gilpin, Wickliffe, Sir Thomas More, Sir Walter Raleigh, Daniel Defoe, Locke, Sir Isaac Newton, Lord Bacon, Milton, Sir William Jones, and some other of the greatest men our country has produced. The PEOPLE'S BRITISH PLUTARCH, in fact, has yet to be written.

Meanwhile such 'Lives' as exist of these illustrious Englishmen should be diligently read by young working men, whenever and wherever they are within reach. Never mind the prejudiced colouring which is thrown over some of these biographies. *Note deeply the facts*: and draw your own conclusions as to the consistency of any particular act related by the biographer. I forbear to draw up a list of biographies which, however imperfect, are the best worth reading; for I should be tempted to swell it to a great length. To speak truth, I never thought any biography that ever fell into my hands utterly worthless, however ill-written. The idiosyncrasy of each particular man presents something worth studying, and treasuring up in the mind. And if I had to be closed up again within four walls for a year or two, and were to be told that I could only be allowed to select my books from one class of literature,—I should reject poetry, philosophy, history, and language,—and name *biography*. It is at once the most deeply instructive and entertaining kind of literature in existence.

I propose directing your attention to some other

branches of literature, in another paper. In the meantime, do you read and think more earnestly than ever—for the real joys of learning are only tasted by the most earnest student.

LETTER VII.

“Read, not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider.” “The unlearned man knoweth not what it is to descend into himself, and to call himself to account; nor the pleasure of that most pleasant life, which consists in our daily feeling ourselves become better.”—BACON.

MEN OF THE FUTURE,—No language—not even the glorious Greek—possesses a more magnificent catalogue of the highest class of books—the books of the wise—than our noble English tongue. I presumed to urge on your zeal the necessity of acquiring an elementary knowledge of science, language, and history, in the outset of study, as your first and most imperative work. In my last brief letter, I mentioned a few books for occasional reading. Let me now point you to the richest part of the storehouse of English prose. I mean to those writers who are evermore the companions of the most highly educated and reflective minds—because their wisdom is enshrined either in the fullest and grandest periods, or it is conveyed with such winning quaintness, as to charm the ear with music, while the mind is won by intelligence.

Among these transcendent writers there is error to be found, of course : you do not expect to find the product of any human mind without it. The subjects on which some of them treat may also seem uninviting to some of you. But if a man be in earnest in his search for wisdom, he will not confine his reading to authors who, he is aware beforehand, think as he thinks. And if we desire to know all the richness of our language, our walk must be taken into fields of literature, some of which are neither popular nor utilitarian,

The great name affixed to the motto above must be mentioned first in this list ; but I need not dwell upon it, having already commended his book of thought-gems—the ‘ Essays,’ to your notice. Hooker and Jeremy Taylor—both divines—claim the next place. They are authors who have carried the harmony of the language to its perfection. But how diverse their manner ? Note the stately march of this passage of Hooker :

“ But so it is, the name of the Light of Nature is made hateful with men ; the Star of Reason and Learning, and all other such like helps, beginneth no otherwise to be thought of, than if it were an unlucky comet ; or as if God had so accursed it, that it should never shine or give light in things concerning our duty in any way towards Him, but be esteemed as that star in the Revelation, called Wormwood, which, being fallen from heaven, maketh

rivers and waters in which it falleth so bitter, that men tasting them die thereof. A number there are who think they cannot admire as they ought the power and authority of the word of God, if in things divine they should attribute any force to man's reason; for which cause they never use reason so willingly as to disgrace reason. Their usual and common discourses are unto this effect. First, 'The natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' By these, and the like disputes, an opinion hath spread itself very far in the world; as if the way to be ripe in faith were to be raw in wit and judgment; as if reason were an enemy to religion, childish simplicity the mother of ghostly and divine wisdom!"

And then—the unsurpassable sweetness of these passages of Jeremy Taylor:

"It is a mighty change that is made by the death of every person, and it is visible to us who are alive. Reckon but from the spritefulness of youth, the fair cheeks and the full eyes of childhood, from the vigorousness and strong flexure of the joints of five-and-twenty, to the hollowness and dead paleness, to the loathsomeness and horror of a three-day's burial, and we shall perceive the distance to be very great and very strange. But so I have seen a Rose newly springing from the clefts of its hood

and at first it was fair as the morning, and full with the dew of heaven, as a lamb's-fleece : but when a ruder breath had forced open its virgin modesty, and dismantled its too youthful and unripe retirements, it began to put on darkness, and to decline to softness, and the symptoms of a sickly age ; it bowed the head, and broke its stalk, and at night having lost some of its leaves, and all its beauty, it fell into the portion of weeds and worn-out faces."

"As when the sun approaching towards the gates of the morning, he first opens a little eye of heaven, and sends away the spirits of darkness, and gives light to a cock, and calls up the lark to matins, and by-and-by gilds the fringes of a cloud, and peeps over the eastern hills, thrusting out his golden horns, like those which bedecked the brows of *Moses* when he was forced to wear a veil, because himself had seen the face of God ; and still while a man tells the story, the sun gets up higher, till he shows a fair face and a full light, and then he shines one whole day, under a cloud often, and sometimes weeping great and little showers, and sets quickly—so is a man's reason and life."

Fragments like these may suffice to show any reader of taste that if he would learn where the wealth of our language is to be found, he must not look for it in the slipshod writing of to-day ; but must search for it in such unfashionable volumes

as the 'Ecclesiastical Polity,' and the 'Holy Living and Dying.'

Sir Thomas Browne is another of these deeply reflecting and yet richly-ornamental writers. Some of our every-day authors have not as much thought in an entire volume as he has in a page. What grandeur of expression as well as depth of reflection there is in this extract :

"A great part of antiquity contented their hopes of subsistency with a transmigration of their souls—a good way to continue their memories, while, having the advantage of plural successions, they could not but act something remarkable in such a variety of beings ; and, enjoying the fame of their past selves, make accumulation of glory unto their last durations. Others, rather than be lost in the uncomfortable night of nothing, were content to recede into the common being, and make one particle of the public soul of all things, which was no more than to return into their unknown and divine original again. Egyptian ingenuity was more unsatisfied, contriving their bodies in sweet consistencies to attend the return of their souls. But all was vanity, feeding the wind, and folly. The Egyptian mummies, which Cambyzes or time hath spared, avarice now consumeth. Mummy is become merchandise ; Mizraim cures wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for balsams."

Our glorious Milton's prose often equals the most superb passages in these four writers ; and some

paragraphs in Sir Walter Raleigh's 'History of the World' are nearly as majestic in style. Their music, but more often their sententiousness and pregnancy of meaning, is resembled in Owen Feltham's 'Resolves,' in Bishop Hall, and quaint Thomas Fuller.

In my humble opinion, we have but two living prose writers who will be placed by posterity in the highest class of useful and majestic thinkers : Thomas Carlyle, and Walter Savage Landor. Many examples of excellence might be selected especially from the 'Sartor Resartus' of Mr. Carlyle ; but I forbear. Mr. Landor's name is less popular ; but his learning is richer, his taste infinitely more polished, and his mind not less powerful, than Mr. Carlyle's. There is not nobler eloquence in the whole compass of the language, than that contained in the following brief extract from the 'Imaginary Conversations.' The dialogue is between Kosciusko, the great Polish patriot, and Poniatowski, the favourite Polish general of Napoleon, who was drowned in the escape from Dresden : the conversation is supposed to take place during Kosciusko's exile.

" *K.*—We hear many complaints of princes and of fortune ; but believe me, Poniatowski, there never was a good or generous action that met with much ingratitude.

" *P.*—Is it possible you can say so ? you, to whom no statues are erected, no hymns are sung in public

processions ; you, who have no country,—and you smile upon such injuries and such losses !

“*K.* My friend, I have lost nothing : I have received no injury. I am in the midst of our country day and night. Absence is not of matter ; the body does not make it. Absence is the invisible and incorporeal mother of ideal beauty. Were I in Poland, how many things are there which would disturb and perhaps exasperate me !—Here I can think of her as of some departed soul, not yet indeed clothed in light, not exempted from sorrowfulness, but divested of passion, removed from tumult, and inviting to contemplation. She is dearer to me because she reminds me that I have performed my duty towards her. Permit me to go on. I said that a good or generous action never met with much ingratitude. I do not deny that ingratitude may be very general ; but even if we experience it from all quarters, there is still no evidence of its weight or its intensity. We bear upon our heads an immense column of air ; but the nature of things has rendered us insensible of it altogether. Have not we also a strength and a support against what is equally external—the breath of worthless men ? Very far is that from being much or great, which a single movement of self-esteem tosses up and scatters. Slaves make out of barbarians a king or emperor ; the clumsiest hand can fashion such misshapen images ; but the high and

discerning spirit spreads out its wings from precipices, raises itself up slowly by great efforts, acquires ease, velocity, and might, by elevation, and suns itself in the smiles of its Creator."

Some of you will say—"You are again directing us to books many of which are difficult to reach." True : but let me tell you that I reached and read many of them before I left the stall ; and that, too, in an obscure and apparently unfavourable town like Gainsborough, in Lincolnshire. Only be in earnest about books—make keen and restless inquiries after them—keep them clean when people lend them to you (excuse my telling you that, for it is by no means unimportant, you will find)—and return them punctually—and you will have a wider and wealthier circle of reading than, perhaps, you may have hoped for. Do not scorn to borrow books, in order to get knowledge. Look for the time when you shall have it independently ; and plod on, unweariedly,—reaping meanwhile a present reward in what you are learning.

XIII.

LETTERS TO YOUNG WORKING MEN.

[*Second Series : selected from the ' Northern Tribune '*
of 1855.]

LETTER I.

I COMMENCE a second series of familiar and friendly letters to you, my younger brethren, the "Men of the Future," with a deep consciousness of my own imperfections. But, if we all waited till we had attained our ideal standard of mental and moral excellence, before we attempted to incite others to commence the struggle for attainment, the world would progress but slowly. However broken and imperfect may be the utterance of mind to mind, yet a few words of earnestness, from one who has experienced the combat with difficulty, may have their fruition in stirring up some to diligence with that faith—together with the encouraging remembrance that my former Letters drew forth acknowledgments of benefit written and spoken, from many scores of young working men—I again venture to address you. The last day of 1854 found me en-

gaged in endeavouring to impress a number of young working men in London with a conviction of the Value and Right Use of Time ; and this first letter will take its tone, and in part, its expression, from the state of mind, in which I then spoke.

It seems to me that we are too neglectful of some particular times that might be turned to practical benefit. In the fall of the leaf, in the bareness and outward death of winter, in the return of the flowers and songs of spring, and in the glory and refulgence of summer, we can all find a common lesson. Man is a part of the great system of Nature. His birth and childhood, his youth and manhood, his old age and death, have all their resemblances in the outward growth and decay of things around him. They remind him of his own little life, its changes, its shortness and uncertainty, and its end. And a man must be strangely devoid of reflection who does not ask himself at the close of a year—"How have I spent the year which is now ending? Shall I live through the next year? And, if so, how shall I deport myself, as I proceed with the pilgrimage I have to make through life?"

Scarcely any of us, old or young, are without such thoughts. The worst of it is that, in the majority of cases, these are but passing thoughts : thoughts soon dissipated, and only raised naturally in the mind by the recurrence of the saying, "The last day in the old year is come again!"—or, by the change

of the figures 1853 to 1854, or 1854 to 1855. They are not thoughts that dwell in the mind, and deepen there, and take the healthful form of reflection. Reflection : the only inward process by which the mind can be raised and strengthened, the heart corrected and improved. You may surround a man with outward circumstances that will have a powerful effect in ameliorating his character. On the character of a child outward circumstances are almost all-powerful. You may mould a child almost as you please, if you thoughtfully study its organization. It is the "creature of circumstance" : that is to say, of education directed to its organization. And the upgrown man is still the "creature of circumstance" ; but now the phrase (which is strictly philosophical) has a more compound meaning. Man's moral, as well as his intellectual, nature and power are now developed. Education—that is to say, the institutions, customs, and practices of society (for it is education all the way through with us : our education is not consummated by our having learnt to read and write, at school : *educo*—to lead out of, to lead on : we are led on, educated, by the entire experience of life)—acting upon our original constitution, and knowledge. And, now, from knowledge, education, and organization, is evolved a moral power, which has its spring or commencement in the act of reflection.

What *is* Reflection—does any one ask ? Think-

ing—thinking—thinking, until, from all the stores of our knowledge and experience, we collect motives, present them to the mind, keep them before it so as to create, resolve, and act upon it; and still keep them before it, so that our resolve may be strengthened, and our action continued. I know not in what better way to define reflection. There are processes of the mind which partake of the nature of reflection without amounting to it, in the value and effective sense of the word. Thus a man may call up his past experience, and please or sadden himself by looking at it, as he would by looking on an old portrait of himself; but if he collect no motives and form no resolves for action, while doing this he has only been *musings*: he has not been reflecting in the full and proper sense of the word. Again, a man may not only recall the experience of the past, but throw forward his imagination into the future: he may say to himself—‘Ah, when I was in such and such circumstances, I did so and so? If the like circumstances recur this coming year, I wonder how I shall act? And if entirely new circumstances occur, I wonder how I shall act, and what the result will be?’

Well, but this is only *reverie*: it is not reflection, in the worthy and potential sense of the word. Reflection is thinking and thinking on, till motives grow into giants and compel the will, resolve is formed, strengthened, rendered unsubduable, and

action—decided and continuous action—is produced. Reflection is the grand mental lever by which a man's own character is raised and purified, so as to render him consciously more noble to himself, to make him more instrumental of good to all living around him, and, perhaps, to future generations. Without reflection a man is characterless, save that you call him the mere creature of impulse, and then you have no dependence on him : he may start off and run a race against nothing and nobody to the north, when you are employing all the cogency of reason, and arguing till you sweat, to persuade him that it will be for his unspeakable felicity to go south. But a reflecting man is a man of character, and you know where to have him when you are talking to him : he does not go by fits and starts, like the creature of impulse : he has a line of action regulated by reason : and he is always valuable as a friend, or an ally in any undertaking, because when you have once won him you are likely to keep him, so long as you act truthfully.

May I hope that you are men of reflection, and that the very youngest among you come in some degree under that designation ? Then, you will appreciate the object I have in view. I aim not only to persuade you that Time is valuable, but that the time which remains to each of you—even if some of you have already spent the greater part of your lives—is of more value to you than the time

you have already lived ; and, therefore ought to be spent with more intelligent husbandry. If I may illustrate the value of Time by the value of money, I would ask you, which is now of the most value to you, the money, be it ever so little, you have in your pocket now, together with the money you expect to earn next week,—or the money you have already spent in the course of life? Why, if you have spent hundreds, nay thousands, it is all of less value to you (unless it have secured some beneficial result as interest, or in any other form), than a single sixpence you may now possess, or a single pound you expect to earn next week. The past is gone and spent: you cannot recover it, by a wish, to spend over again. It is so with Time: it is so with human life. The last day of 1854 will never return: that hour to which the clock last pointed can never be recalled. Thus every remaining day and hour becomes of increased value and importance to us.

I do not mean anything so foolish as that we are never to recall the past—never to heave a sigh that we have misspent it. That is utterly impossible with a reflecting mind: and it is reflection that I am enforcing. I only wish to impress on your minds and my own, a thorough conviction that all remembrance of the past is valueless to us, unless it aids us to make improvement in the future. The man who has wasted a fortune, and only idly

deplores it, whimpers, and tells us if he had his chance to come over again he would do better, is but a foolish fellow, and disproves his own words by his idleness. He should be doing better now, to make us believe him.

‘Remember that time is money,’ says Franklin—and his saying has, doubtless, laid the foundation of many a man’s fortune—‘Remember that time is money.’ Most true: and we may follow out his idea, and give it more elevated meanings. Remember that time is Knowledge—that Time is Truth—that Time is Character—that Time is Power—that Time is Usefulness—that Time is Happiness. All this is equally as true as that Time is Money. Time is *not* money, if a man loses the time in which he might have got it: it is only money lost. Time is Money to the man who uses time to get it. And, in the same sense, Time is Knowledge, Truth, Character, Power, Usefulness, and Happiness. And these, my brothers, are the right and noble uses of Time.

LETTER II.

I. The Right Use of Time is to get Knowledge. You must begin there. You can neither have Truth, nor Character, nor Power, nor Usefulness, nor Happiness (in the elevated sense) without Knowledge. What says that ancient Eastern man, in

the Book of Proverbs? They say it was King Solomon; but the highest name could not give value to the words: for beauty and sense they excel many men's words as much as a child's penny necklace is transcended in value by a string of oriental pearls.

"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that findeth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. Wisdom is the principal thing: therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she will bring thee to honour when thou dost embrace her. She will give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee."

This is not spoken of any restricted and particular kind of wisdom; but, of all true wisdom—of all knowledge which enlightens and enlarges and purifies the mind. And that knowledge deserves this eulogium you may easily satisfy yourselves. Compare an ignorant and illiterate man with one whose powers and capabilities are stored and cultivated, and you see how vast is the superiority of the one to the other. How low, how grovelling are the tastes and desires of the man whose mind has never been

opened by culture ! How rude are his amusements, and sometimes, how brutal ! What narrow and confined notions he has of things—what a blank the great Book of Nature, with all its beauty, appears to him ! True, such a man is often far more to be pitied than blamed. His “betters” have taken no care of him. They did not desire to see him get knowledge, and become a man worthy of the name.

But what then ? Shall we succumb beneath our disadvantages, and be crushed into indolence and helplessness by the faulty arrangements of Society ? That would be to revenge ourselves upon ourselves. If a working man refuses to educate himself, because he has been unfairly dealt with, he himself must suffer the chief loss. No : there is a nobler thought than that : it is to resolve to conquer difficulties, and to remember that our conquest will be all the grander because our difficulties were so great. What is the value of that boast on the part of that “well-born” young man, who was cradled in silk and pillowed on velvet,—who was instructed in grammar and languages, in the history of nations, and the laws and triumphs of science, from his childhood,—who had well-paid masters to wait upon him and smooth every difficulty in his path,—to guide him over the stepping-stones without wetting his feet, and over the flints without cutting his toes,—who was “crammed” and pushed early into a University, cheered forward in the acquirement of learned honours, and

who had wealth to purchase a grand library, and to surround himself with the best books in profusion,—what is the value of his boast compared with the real honour due to those who have won a name in the history and literature of their country, in spite of poverty and want, of hardship and neglect?

How did they do it? By remembering that the first and most necessary use of Time was to get knowledge. None of them could command large leisure, any more than yourselves. They had to earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow and the labour of their hands, in the outset of life, like yourselves. I need not remind you of names. I have often done so, until I fear to weary you with them. Recall them, for yourselves; and remember that these distinguished labourers might have said—what some of you may be tempted to say—“I have not time: I must give it up: I shall never be able to make anything out!” But they were neither mental cowards, nor mental idlers. They reflected, they gathered motives, they resolved—and they worked and won! Above all, they were economists of Time. They did not waste it. They perceived how precious every spare five minutes was in value. It is this that you, my brothers, should remember. You have no leisure days—except your Sundays—to build upon in your calculations for making acquirements. You may have very few leisure hours in the week. But how many minutes

have you? How many in the morning—how many at noon—how many in the evening? How many do you waste on idle and useless—and, perhaps, worse than useless—conversation? How many in unnecessary sleep? What say you? “We must take care of our health.” Then will you have health and ignorance—or sacrifice a little health now, and get knowledge? *Now*, I say; for it is now that you can safely forego a measure of sleep; you cannot so safely forego it when you become older. How much time do you waste in dancing? I must again—and in spite of the charge of, “Puritanism”—bear my testimony against that consumption of precious time in frivolity. I do not say it is wrong—I believe it to be right—that on some festive occasions you enjoy a dance; it is against this dancing—dancing—dancing, every week, and many evenings of a week, that I protest. You may dance all your brains down into your heels; but you will not be the wiser for that. How much time—I must speak out and reiterate my speaking so long as the accursed evil lasts—how much Time do you waste—do you murder, I mean—in the shuffling about of those dirty bits of pasteboard with the black and red marks upon them? Never touch these “Devil’s books,” as a good old Methodist used to call them when I was a boy,—never touch them; never be entangled in their sottish seductions, and in all the petty wrangling and spite—or, otherwise, the

empty and silly laughter—that card-playing creates. It is an employment for knaves or idiots—but not for you. “We must have relaxation!” do you say? I am ashamed to hear young men talk about it. They are, many of them, so relaxed already that one may expect to see the next generation become a race of very effeminate creatures, if the same example goes on. Relaxation! Rest! Think of work—of brain-work—if you mean to get Knowledge.

Will you make the year 1855 a year of solid acquirements? Get a blank book ready, and make your entries in it—first of your resolves, and then of your progress. Be faithful with yourselves. Write it down when you relapse into negligence, and again resolve; and not only resolve, but do better. Divide your time, be it ever so scanty. Whatever you resolve to do, be methodical in doing it, if you mean to do anything well. Method—method, is half the battle. Begin, too, at the beginning. If you determine to learn a language, get hold of the grammar first. Trust to no ‘Hamiltonian’ systems for a foundation. Translated lessons will be a grand help to you when you have laid your foundation in a knowledge of the grammar; but if you attempt to learn a language without first learning the grammar, you will never be more than a smatterer, and be ever finding that you ought to begin over again. So, with the mathematics; get your Euclid, and

stick to him till you thoroughly understand the first book : do not attempt to go further until you have mastered that, though you may have to go through it half-a-dozen times. I need not commend the acquirement of a language to you. It will open to you a new and delightful region of thought ;—not to mention its practical advantages in unfolding the meanings of words in your own tongue, if it be the Latin you acquire ;—or in enabling you to talk a living speech, or read it, if it be the French that you master, or the German, or any other modern tongue. To master the propositions of Geometry not only familiarizes the mind of a man with mathematical allusions which abound in books, and gives him an acquaintance with great and scientific truths, but schools him in the truest logic : a good acquaintance with Euclid gives the mind a sounder discipline in reasoning than all the treatises on Logic that may be within reach.

Method should be observed in your endeavour to acquire any other branch of Knowledge, if you mean to acquire it solidly. In a science, the nomenclature should be mastered. For instance, in Natural History, or Zoology, the great net-work of divisions into classes, orders, etc., should be mastered, so that you may be able at once to assign an animal to the “Pachydermata,” the “Carnivora,” the “Ruminantia,” the “Rodentia”—and so on. I need not commend a knowledge of Zoology to you. Is there a more

delightful and healthful employment of the intellect than in tracing the great plan of Nature in her development of the varied faculties of living beings, and their wondrous adaptations to their circumstances? And Human History—that great register of our race—how imperfect must a man's knowledge of Man be who is unacquainted with what Men have done and said and thought, during these thousands of years, and in different climes? The facts of History are of course its most useful riches; but these cannot be stored up in the mind, so as to be found when wanted, without Method. Some familiar acquaintance with Chronology is necessary. I do not mean that a voluminous chronological table should be committed to memory, beginning with “4004 B.C. the world was created,” and ending with “November 5th A.D. 1854, the Battle of Inkermann was fought.” But the memory should be able, in a moment, to recur to the dates of great events, and to the grand eras which were formed by the contemporary existence of certain great men: the representative groups of human greatness.

I will not weary you with dwelling longer on this head—for, already, I may be charged with repetition. I will only say—Learn the alphabet, that you may be able easily to spell: learn to spell that you may be able easily and with delight to read, in the great book of universal and useful Knowledge.

LETTER III.

The right and noble uses of Time, I said, my brothers, were to attain Knowledge, Truth, Character, Power, Usefulness, and Happiness. With the attainment of Knowledge I have dealt very imperfectly and briefly ; and yet I must be more brief in the imperfect remarks I have to offer on what I have suggested to be the other great uses of Time.

2. The right use of Time is to get hold of Truth. You cannot reach Truth without first acquiring Knowledge ; and you are not likely to reach it without a good deal of Knowledge. They say Pope was wrong when he said " A little learning is a dangerous thing." But he was right—never poet was more right, in the way in which he said it. He did not mean that stolid and lumpish ignorance was preferable to a little knowledge : he meant that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing because, for want of greater, it leads a man to imperfect and erroneous conclusions. He knew that a totally ignorant man may be compared to a totally blind man, who can neither discern forms nor colours ; and a man with a little knowledge to one who sees things under a dim twilight, when neither forms nor colours can be accurately distinguished, for an angular object may appear rounded, and a bright red but a dull brown, by a dim twilight ; while the man of large culture and information may be compared to the man who

beholds objects in the broad light of noon, when forms and shapes stand out in their symmetry and due proportions, and colours wear their proper brilliancy and beauty.

An ignorant man usually remains in the mere prejudices given him by those who had the earliest care of him ; or he sees nothing, mentally, as it really is. You ask him for his ideas of great truths ; but how formless, how misshapen, how grotesque and unsightly, are the responses to your questions ; It is as if you were to resort to a quack-enchanter who professed to “call up spirits from the vasty deep,” and, behold, when he has waved his wand for the summoning forth of forms of awful stature and surpassing grandeur and beauty—only owls and bats obey his rod, and flutter before your disappointed vision ! A man of little knowledge is, usually, either a zealot and a bigot,—or he is an intolerable bore,—or he is an overblown nuisance of conceit and vanity. Some men who are called “learned and able,” are really men of little knowledge, and so become bigots. One pursuit, and that a dull one, narrows the mind, until the man says there is no worthy knowledge but that which he pursues : every other path but his leads to vanity and error, and his only leads to truth. How does he know, when he has never tried any other road ? Is it worth while to argue with such a man, unless he will give up his premises—his bigotry, in plain

language? Again : a man by fondness for some one pursuit may ignore the excellence and usefulness of all others. He may be really excellent in his one pursuit ; but because he will insist on perpetually and unseasonably introducing it, he becomes what is so expressively called—a bore. Then there is the Smatterer : the man who deprecates the stupidity of confining yourself to one pursuit, and restlessly attempts many ; but only flits, like a butterfly, through the garden of Knowledge, resting nowhere long enough and industriously, to gather ought worth gathering. He knows so little of anything, that he is not through the A.B.C. of anything ; and yet he is all vanity and conceit and self-sufficiency. Truth ! What does he know about it ? “ As much as a horse knows of a new shilling,” as they say in Yorkshire. Yet, if you happen to express a doubt of his correctness when he takes upon himself to “ pronounce,” he will, very likely, give himself airs, and tell you “ You don’t understand the subject.”

“ A little learning is a dangerous thing :
Drink deep—or taste not of the Pierian spring.”

Drink deep : let your draughts of Knowledge be copious. Get all the knowledge you can on all subjects : get the clearest and most complete knowledge you can of every subject. That is the surest mode of arriving at Truth. If Truth be hid in a well, according to the old proverb, then it must be

the man who reaches to the bottom, and searches most carefully, patiently, and perseveringly, who will find her—must it not? What right has a man to pronounce positively on any subject, if he have not all the data necessary to form an accurate judgment? Can a man pronounce justly on a question of planetary revolutions, if he does not know that the orbits of the planets are elliptical and not circular? Can a man be expected to decide a difficult question in chronology who scarcely knows whether Oliver Cromwell lived before or after Julius Cæsar? Have I any right to pronounce on the value of a man's character without knowing his antecedents? Has any man a right to sum up, or is he able to sum up, a question of evidence, when he knows scarcely anything of either the nature or rules of evidence?

Believe me, my brothers, you will find the man of broad, solid, extensive culture to be often the least positive of men on subjects which many people are so positive about. On such matters he learns to say with Socrates, "All that I know is, that I know nothing." While on some other subjects which many hold to be full of holy and mysterious Truth, though it is, according to their solemn confession, incomprehensible,—he pronounces positively "Where is your evidence?" he asks. There is none. "Then I deny your Truth—comprehensible or incomprehensible," he rejoins; "where there is no

evidence there can be no Truth, for there is—nothing!”

Since Truth cannot be had without evidence, the value of large and complete knowledge becomes more apparent. Yet I say not that we are always to refuse our credence where our knowledge is incomplete, because the evidence is necessarily scanty ; and I must confess that I dislike to witness a supercilious sneer at the masterly reasoner, Butler, when in the famous “Analogy,” he urges the fact that we often have to credit only probable evidence ; and maintains the wisdom of credence and of action upon it, often when we have but a slight balance of probability.

It may be deemed that I should have said less about the difficulty of acquiring Truth, and have directed my remarks chiefly to showing Truth's value. Nay : I have dwelt most strongly on what I feel to be the necessary point : the absolute necessity of earnest and complete search to obtain it. As for its value, I need not be “so superfluous” as to spend many words in proclaiming it—since all men profess either to have it, as do the majority of mankind ; or to be most anxiously seeking for it, as do the little minority. I need not sound the praise of what all men declare—or nearly all men—that they have found, and that they assert, trumpet-tongued, to be the most valuable possession they have. I only say—get it, even at the cost of hours, months, and

years of laborious search. Get it because it is the only healthful food on which the mind can grow and flourish. If a man were shown that his physical food were mixed with slow poison, and that, if he persisted in taking it, his eyesight would fail, his limbs shrink and be crippled, and his whole life soon come to a close, would he not be reckoned either a criminal or a lunatic? Can a milder judgment be passed on the man who is indifferent about being nourished mentally by the pure and salutary food of Truth, and is content to be poisoned with Error?

3. The right use of Time is to acquire Character. We must obtain knowledge to get hold of Truth; and we must get hold of truth, that it may take hold of us. Tell us not of a man's knowledge, if it does not lead him to grasp at truth: talk not of his seizure of truth, if he does not maintain it with his tongue and embody it in his character, so as to become, most unmistakably and thoroughly, a truthful man. It is not a right and earnest use of time, it is but amusing ourselves, to search into truths as mere speculations: we must maintain and exemplify the truths. I don't mean scientific truths, such as gravitation or attraction. Gravity is independent of our volition; and we can no more increase or destroy the gravity of a single particle of matter than we can add a cubit to our stature, or take one away from it.

But we can maintain intellectual and exemplify

moral truths. Does a man discover that some doctrine he had hitherto held in common with his so-called "orthodox" friends is unfounded on evidence? Is that his clear conviction, after large, patient, and persevering search? Let him say it out, manfully—but courteously; and not seek to curry favour with his orthodox friends. Does a man dread considerable detriment to his circumstances if he speaks out manfully? I would rather he spoke out under any circumstances, so that truth could be advantaged; but, under no circumstances can he commit himself to a palpable denial of truth and maintenance of falsehood, and retain character. He will lose it, even in the eyes of those whom he thus meanly seeks to please. They will inwardly despise him, while they admit him to the diluted radiance of a moonbeam smile. Character is never solidly reputable, it wins no true respect, unless it be of a piece with a man's professed convictions. No man acquires a character worth having who professes to believe certain truths, and to regard the efficacy of moral rules, and who yet lives in the daily and open violation of them.

I do not say that many men act up to their full convictions concerning moral conduct, at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances. There was one who was in earnest for moral purity, if ever man was; and yet we find him exclaiming, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And he had before said,

“When I would do good, evil is present with me.” Could that great truthful heart and soul have more plainly confessed his sense of the struggle it takes to attain and preserve moral purity? Depend upon it, the man who says he never falls, is either never tempted or tried, or he is ignorant of his own nature ; or, what is worse, a hypocrite. The lines of Thomas Moore assert a severe truth respecting the pretender to moral perfection :

“Vain was the man, and false as vain,
Who said—were he ordained to run
His long career of life again,
He would do all that he had done.”

Let us remember, however, that though immaculate perfection of moral character is not to be attained, the right use of Life is to preserve our rectitude as uniformly as possible. Close reflection and self-examination as to the motives on which we speak and act, and a faithful and oft-repeated lessening of ourselves on rectitude, will help us to preserve it. And it is a great advantage of our being creatures of habit, that the more constantly we endeavour to act up to our convictions of moral rectitude, the more deeply rooted will be our attachment to it, the keener our self-condemnation when we fall into error ; and by that very sensitiveness our likelihood to err becomes less.

Let not what has been said of the value of consistency of character—of the necessity of a man's

character being of a piece with his professed convictions—lead you into the error of some weak people who make a bugbear of consistency. “I must do so and so,” say they; “it is contrary to what I have hitherto done. The folks will say I am always changing!” What of that—if you change for the better? If you become sensible that you have been going wrong, will you not have indescribable satisfaction in beginning to go right; and will it not be a joyful song to sing aloud that you know it? Above all things, my brothers, abhor the false pride of “consistency” which refuses to make an apology when you have erred, lest it should render you little and weak in the eyes of your friends, and give your foes a lucky opportunity to sneer at you, and triumph over you. Remember, that the man who is brave enough to make an apology shows that he is conscious of having some worth of character to fall back upon, however humbly his apology may seem to lessen him. And, after all, it is a mistake to suppose that the making of an apology for an error or an offence will lessen us—except with those whose censure is more desirable than their praise: the candid, the virtuous, and the wise will esteem it a mark of the brightest sincerity in us.

In one word, character must be true to be wise, must be good to be great. What a soil it is on the image of some of our brightest intellectual men, that they were neither true nor good men! How we

ache with shame before the political scoundrelism of Bolingbroke!—how the heart bleeds at the remembrance of the meanness of Bacon! We feel as if it would be an unspeakable relief could we annihilate the bad facts in the life of each—that it would cleanse high intellect from the stain of an unnatural slander—that it would doubly enthrone Genius, and render it all-unquestionably worthy of our willing worship.

LETTER IV.

4. The right Use of Time is to gain power. I have said that we should gain knowledge in order to gain truth, and truth that we may gain character; and I add, that we should gain character that we may gain power. “Power!” some may object, on first thought; “do you mean to say *that* is a right use of Time?” Yes. Pray, who and what is a powerless man? Nothing: nobody. What are the working classes politically? Nothing: nobody. They had no votes till lately. What is a penniless beggar in a company of capitalists? Nothing: nobody. He has no gift of speech: no power in his tongue. What is a paralytic where a stone many tons’ weight has to be raised by levers? Nothing: nobody. He had no nervous force: no power, in his limbs.

Now a man without the power resulting from

character may be compared to any of these. It is lamentably true that power may be won without character. But I speak not of the power which enables a man, however vile, to trample on the rights and freedom of others—of “imperial” power, and a throne, which may be gained by wading through a pool of blood wantonly and ferociously shed from the hearts of the innocent and unoffending! I speak of moral influence which is the most precious of all power—power *par excellence*—for it enables a man to banish evil, and thus bless the world; instead of bruising it, and blighting its fairest fruits—like the Man of the *coup d’etat*. The power that we need is not to be obtained by force, nor will it consist in force; but in earnestness of advocacy and energy and persistency of persuasion, backed up by character and example. We can remove no evils without power; and the world is crowded with them. A man is not to be blamed for acquiring power; but for making a bad use of it. Pray, how is the wrong in the world to be remedied, unless men get power to remove it?

“Oh, never fear! the world progresses: Truth will spread, and set all right at last!” Why, what are you talking about? That rhapsodical and idle talk is ridiculous. How is the Truth to spread? Where is it to spread? Upon the rocks and mountains? Among the flowers, and over all the trees? On the billows of the ocean? Or is it to perco-

late through the shells and pebbles and sands of the sea-shore? Man, it must sink into our heads and hearts, to chase away evil! Truth itself is but an attribute! it must be truthful men that must set the world right. We must not wait for the fulfilment of that silly dream of Truth, as a kind of imaginary and invisible goddess, flying about the world, setting all right by a sort of incomprehensible necromancy, and bringing with it the Millennium. The great regeneration, the entire redemption from error, of all mankind, must be brought about by the men who have already grasped truth. They who have the truth must win a power to spread truth: it never will be spread, except by and from the Few to the Many.

Do not be deterred, by the clamours of those who are interested in preserving error, from trying to have your own way in spreading truth. Some people find fault with a man for determination in trying to have his own way. But there is not a better quality than that in a man, if he thinks his own way right,—if he feels convinced by deep reflection that his own way is right. A man should be resolved to bite a piece of iron in two, rather than fail in having his own way, if he be solidly convinced that his own way is right. It is not your silken-tongued, easy-going, creeping-in-slippers people that succeed in spreading Truth: it is the earnest men.

Truth, as yet, is a dweller in corners and obscure and out-of-the-way places. Her advocates are mean in worldly rank, and are scorned and persecuted by the great "respectable" world. She must be brought out and set in the high places; and we must win power, influence, moral authority; in order that we may place her in a commanding and attractive position, that all men may see and worship her.

5. The right Use of Time is to attain Usefulness. This is the proper issue of Power: we ought to gain it that we may be useful. Truth will never spring out of the earth full-armed, like Minerva from the brain of Jupiter, and bend men to her sway. I repeat, it is truthful men that must spread Truth. Every disciple of Truth must become a missionary, and must be useful and helpful to his fellows. If a man could acquire all the knowledge in the world, and not communicate it to others, he would only live for himself, and be a great dumb monument of selfishness. The leanest horse that drags a cab in the streets of London, the sorriest cur of a dog that guards a house, would be of more real use to mankind than that hugely-knowing, selfish man. They say that Humboldt—who lived to an illustrious old age in Germany—embraced the whole circle of existent knowledge in his mind: he was the great living example of universal knowledge. His was a monarchy grander and richer than would

be that of all the kingdoms of the earth united ! But, it might have been a barren sceptre, had he not given to the world his 'Cosmos,' and other great works, and aided in various ways the furtherance of science.

Whatever acquirements a man makes he misses the main purpose of life, if he be not useful. They who shun exertion are no friends to their species. How is the wrong in the world—its huge pestilence-breeding heaps of ignorance and error—to be swept away, if all shrink from the labour, and refuse to lay hold of the besom of reform ? Would you have the world become such an Augean stable that no moral Hercules could ever be able to cleanse it ? It would have become so already had it not been for the great moral and intellectual workers who have appeared in different ages. They had to tuck up their sleeves, and labour in the mud of ignorance and mire of error, often scarcely able to see their way clearly. And ever and anon the old priests and lovers of the moral muck would come out and raise a hubbub, and cry, " Let it alone, you sacriligious desecrator of the sacred dirt ! "—" Ay, ay, let it alone, we are as happy in it as pigs ! " the deluded multitude would echo. And then some would seize the Reformer's besom, and knock it about his ears, and trample him down in the mire, and, perhaps, leave him lifeless there. So they dealt with many " of whom the world was not

worthy." Oh, if it had not been for these—"the noble army of martyrs"—the world would have become one great dunghill of ignorance and error, of crime and suffering, by this time! My brothers, let grateful love for the noble memories of those who have made our way clearer and freer than was their own impel us to labour. Much—incalculably much—remains yet to be done; and there is imperative need of earnest workers.

One fault of some of the honest labourers in the past should be avoided. They did not all do their work well. They swept up the dirt of Error into little heaps, and left it; thinking others would cart it away when better times came. But behold, the wind of adverse opinion and interest blew the dust about again; and then all had to be done over again! Do not let us imitate the timidity of some of the early labourers: let us do our work entirely.

Above all things let us avoid another error. Do not let us spend life in sweeping where it is already clean, nor of throwing the dirt of error into clean places. Let us go thoughtfully and carefully to work. The less fuss we make the better: pretension is *not* work, remember. While professing to act for usefulness, let us take care that we *are* useful. If some who are not of our party are combating an error manfully, and doing the work of true men, let us beware how we molest them by either word or act. Let them do their work, and let us mind ours. Far

be it from us to asperse a man who is doing the work of a true man, because he is not exactly with us, does not utter our Shibboleth, or differs from us some hair's-breadth on a particular point. No error is more common than this ; and you, my brethren, will find it very difficult to keep out of it—so infectious is this disease of party. But you *must* keep out of it, if you mean to be really and uniformly useful.

Finally, let us each set earnestly about what we know we can do and ought immediately to do ; about removing the evils which are at our doors ; not about those which are at the North Pole, or under Equinoctial Line ; about the evils which stare us in the face, and seem to say, “ Here are the wrongs *you* can remedy ! These demand *your* labour for removal ! ” Every one of us can do something to make the world better. There is no man so weak but among the innumerable evils on every hand he can remove one—if he himself be truthful and in earnest.

6. The right use of Time is to win Happiness. That will be the fruit of Usefulness. But I am not disposed to say much on this head. I would only suggest to you the wisdom of entertaining more moderated and correct ideas of human happiness than prevail with some people. I cannot agree with some that happiness should be made our supreme care : at least, not in their Epicurean sense. I hold that we should bend all our energy on doing

our duty, and trust that real happiness will be the fruit, but not live in a morbid state of craving for it. "Are you happy?" I know is a weak and effeminate question often put to a man. The really manly and sensible question would be, "Are you truthful, are you useful, are you doing your duty both by example and action?" Not pleasure—the vulgar idea of happiness—but pain, suffering, loss, persecution, are, too often, the lot of the truthful and active and useful man. But his suffering would be greater, if he were false and indolent : his conscious degradation would then be intolerably torturous.

The great martyrs enjoyed a nobler and truer happiness while they were being burnt at the stake than they could have secured by recantation to screen their lives and estates. They had—as indeed all men have—to choose between two evils ; or, rather, between unalloyed evil and evil mixed with good ; and they wisely chose the latter. There is no positive and unalloyed happiness for men on earth. The highest, the purest, the most transcendent happiness is to be obtained by getting Knowledge, grasping and securing Truth, and attaining Character and Power, and thereby exerting Usefulness. These, my brothers, are the grand uses of Time. Let me earnestly and affectionately press them on your memory, your judgment, your resolution, your entire and persevering adoption as the purposes, aims, and ends of your remaining life.

XIV.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

A PLAIN SERMON FOR POOR, PLAIN PEOPLE.

“I will arise and go to my Father.”—LUKE xv. 18.

I TAKE the most thrilling words in the Parable of the Prodigal Son for a text; but I mean that we shall have the whole parable for our subject—nay, the whole chapter. You all know how it begins—for we all know the 15th of Luke better than any other chapter in the New Testament.

“Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners, for to hear Him. And the Pharisees and Scribes murmured—murmured—saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.”

They murmured—did the self-righteous Pharisees—because they were so very good—so very good—in their own estimation—and therefore they felt a proud contempt for the Publicans—those proverbial sinners. But, what right had they to denounce the *τελῶναι*, or publicans? Who were these publicans? Don't, any of you, imagine that they were like some of the people who are called publicans in

our country :—sellers of strong drink, and not only sellers of strong drink, but sellers of strong drink to drunkards. If such men were called sellers of men's souls, it would only be a fit name for them—for they sell thousands of men into moral ruin. And how some of them can sleep quietly in their beds, is a wonder—for they have not only sold the man to ruin, but have very often robbed his wife and children of bread and clothing. I wonder that some of them do not fear the Old Lad will fetch 'em before they awake in the morning.

The Publicans that we read about in the New Testament were not sellers of strong drink, but collectors of the public revenue—of the Roman taxes. The publican was a sort of tax-gatherer, custom-house officer, and excise-officer rolled into one. Judea was a conquered country. The stern all-conquering Romans held it in their iron grasp ; and so the Jews had to pay taxes to them. But the proud Romans did not send their tax-gatherers round to men's houses to collect the taxes. The publican “ sat at the receipt of custom ”—at the receipt of the customs, or excise, or taxes. Men were expected to take their payments to him.

Sometimes, he *farmed* the taxes, as the expression goes : he agreed to pay so much money to the government, and receive authority to collect the taxes for himself. Of course, if the man were a grasper, he would make as much as he could out of

the bargain, in the way of profit. But all the publicans were not graspers. There must have been some honest and upright men among them ; and, perhaps, some who had more real piety than the high-professing Pharisees who called them sinners. Such must have been Matthew. He must have been one of the pious souls who were waiting for the promised Messiah—looking for the coming of the Redeemer—or Jesus would not have summoned him so peremptorily, when he saw him “sitting at the receipt of custom” : “Follow Me!” Christ said—and Matthew instantly obeyed. Nor can Zaccheus have been far from the kingdom of God. Christ must have known, too, how he wanted to be right, and was praying with a lowly heart—a heart as lowly as his stature—to be right ; or Jesus would not have said so positively—“Zaccheus, make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house.”

I question if many of the publicans deserved the evil epithet of sinners by pre-eminence, which the Pharisees dealt towards them. The meaning—the real meaning of the Pharisees in using it seems to have been that they were very guilty, being Jews, in collecting taxes for their Pagan conquerors. But, who were the greater sinners—the men that collected taxes, like the publicans—or the men that paid the taxes, like the Pharisees ? The sin of the Jews, as a nation, was that they had come into such a condition as to have to pay taxes to Pagan conquerors.

“Whose is this image and superscription?” asked Jesus. “Cæsar’s,” they answered. “Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things which are God’s.” You know God is *your* king—Christ meant, and you ought to have had nothing to do with earthly sovereigns. But you deserted your Almighty and Heavenly King, and now, you are the enslaved people of proud Pagan conquerors. *There* lay the sin: *not* with the poor publicans. Surely, somebody must collect the taxes from the conquered Jews, unless soldiers were to do it, with violence, and perhaps, murder.

The Saviour knew all about these wicked murmurings of the Pharisees—and how does He meet them? By following the custom of an Oriental teacher—the way of instruction by parables. If you wish to teach an Eastern man, you must condescend to tell him a story, a tale, an imaginary narrative of some sort. You are sure to guide him most effectually by appealing to his imagination. That would do little good with a Western or Northern man: with a Scotsman, for instance. “Dinna fash me with your stories, mon,” he would say. “Lay doon your propositions in a soond, common-sense way, and I’ll listen to ye. I want to ken the logic of it, sir!”

Our Lord knew his countrymen well; and so He speaks to them story-fashion. And, mind ye,—He does not begin by denying that the poor publicans

are sinners ; or denying that the Pharisees are as righteous as they profess to be. He is not so unskilful as to offend their prejudices when He wishes to convince them that He is right in receiving poor sinners and eating with them. He sets about the work of instructing them, so as to lead them to the conclusion that He is right and they are wrong—if they are willing to be convinced.

What a Master the Saviour was in the art of instruction is shown by the way in which He opens His lesson of instruction. He lays hold of their worldliness and love of wealth, and compels their attention irresistibly.—“What man of you having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it ?” What man of us?—the Pharisees would repeat to themselves—why, of course, every man of us would do that : not, for a moment, having any suspicion of what the Saviour was leading to.—“And, when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing.” Ay, no wonder at that—they would be thinking—we all should do the like.—“And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.”—Quite natural—they would say—feeling He could not have said anything more consistent with human nature and common-sense. But they were not expecting Christ

to close down the lesson upon their consciences so quickly and so powerfully.—“ I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.”

One feels sure that every Pharisee who stood on the borders of the crowd would cease his murmuring at the commencement of Christ's discourse ; and when the lesson was thus pressed down upon the conscience, so suddenly, would let his head fall upon his breast, and say, within himself—“ This was what He meant, then. And is there such joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth ? We must be wrong then, in murmuring against this Man. But He means, doubtless, to insinuate that *He* goes to seek the lost sheep, and we do not.”

There, perhaps, prejudice would spring up again ; but the Saviour checks it by presenting the same great truth of the value of the sinner, to the mind of the Pharisee, in another form.—“ Either what woman, having ten pieces of silver—(ten drachmas, each worth about $7\frac{1}{2}d.$)—if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it ? And, when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost.” Yes, Christ means them fully to understand it : the sinner *is* of great value, although they have treated the sinner as if he were worthless.

They believed silver was of great value, and that a lost piece was well worth lighting a candle, and sweeping the house and seeking diligently till it were found.—But Jesus repeats the truth that He means should fasten on their hearts and minds—“Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.” Some of these proud, self-righteous Pharisees must have powerfully felt the application of the Saviour’s words, and have begun to feel ashamed that they had not shown joy at the return of poor sinners, and the finding of the lost. And what must the poor publicans have felt? How different were the words of the sweet Saviour from the silent contempt and proud scorn they had, all along received from the self-righteous Pharisees! Who can wonder that they flocked to hear Jesus, and heard Him gladly?

The plainness of this instruction seems one of the chief points of its excellence. Christ meant to get at the heart and conscience; and so the lesson is so clear that its meaning cannot be mistaken. And there is not a sinner who hears the Gospel preached, or who reads it for himself, but knows how plain it is. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and always. He is still the Good Shepherd that He declared Himself to be: and, still,

‘He goes and seeks the one lost sheep,
And brings His wanderer home.’

There is not an unconverted man who hears the Gospel preached but knows how true this is. Yes, my friend, Christ has often sought you, and He seeks you still. He wants to bear you on His shoulders rejoicing to the flock of His people—His own sheep, who hear His voice and follow Him. He regards you as of great value : He knows that neither the figure of the lost sheep, nor of the lost piece of silver can set forth your real, your eternal value. Have you so little value for yourself that you will not be found of Him? His own sheep,—His own people—wander sometimes :—many of us have often wandered—but

‘ When like wandering sheep we strayed,
He brought us to His fold again ’—

Blessed be His holy Name ! Oh, that I could awaken in some heart to-night the sense of deep and lasting repentance for all this wandering, and the resolve to yield to the Good Shepherd, and seek to be made a true member of His flock !—What joy there would be in heaven !

And is it really so ? Does the King of Angels assure us that there is joy among them, in heaven, over one sinner that repenteth ? Have they, then—those spiritual beings, who are so near the throne of God, and who are the messengers of His will—have *they*, then, this sympathy with us ? What is called “ Science,” and is so pompously spoken of in our time, discovers to us nothing of the future world ;

and our Men of Science, whom some people regard with so much wonder-stricken and foolish admiration, can tell us nothing about it. Nay—because they know nothing about it, they would, in their pride and arrogance, have us believe that there is nothing to be known. But the Saviour knows all about it ; and He assures us that this sympathy of the angels with men exists : that there is a great bond of sympathy of the higher orders of God's moral and spiritual creation towards men.

What a grand opening for thought the Saviour's declaration gives us ! Jesus means us to understand that the great Moral Government of God is one. No wonder, then, that this beautiful bond of sympathy is felt by the angels—and, doubtless, by departed saints too,—in the conversion of sinners—in the spread of Christ's kingdom. Do not let us undervalue ourselves. We are not mere matter—born simply to live a few toilsome days here and then die like dogs and be no more. The holy angels feel our conversion to be of value—for the King of Angels declares it is so. Poor man—poor woman—who have not given your hearts to the Saviour, do you not see what value Christ sets upon you ? Oh, come to Christ ! Say, Lord, I am thy poor wandering sheep : lead me to the fold of Thy people, and let the angels rejoice over me ! Perhaps, I am talking to some poor wanderer who has a father or mother in heaven. Surely, if there be joy among

the angels, there is joy in the hearts of fathers and mothers who have gone home to heaven, over their children that repent. Perhaps, I am talking to more than one husband who has a wife in heaven—to more than one wife who has a husband in heaven. Surely, if there be joy among the angels, there is richer joy in the hearts of wives and husbands who have gone home to heaven, over the repentance of those they dearly loved when on earth! Oh, you who remember the prayers of those who loved you on earth, for your conversion—will you let their prayers be lost, and refuse to join them in heaven. God help you to yield your hearts to Him!

Has the Saviour finished His appeal to the hearts of the proud, self-righteous Pharisees? Nay, He is not half-way through it, yet. There are some of them with hearts untouched—hearts hard to reach—feeling hardened scorn for poor publicans and sinners, and equal scorn—nay, perhaps, wrath and hate for the Divine Teacher. But Jesus does not mean to give them up. He knows that however powerful and well-adapted what He has already said may have been to move worldly minds—there are chords in the human heart which tremble still more thrillingly, and yield, when touched by a Master hand. Stories of the finding of a lost sheep, or piece of silver, have a certain influence on the mind; but we all feel that it is a story of thorough human interest—of human rectitude and human error—of

human pain and human pleasure—of human joy and human sorrow—which affects us most deeply. So the Saviour leaves the story of the inanimate piece of silver, and of the sheep, the mere animal, and begins a story of deep human interest : a story of which the whole age of man, and of which all the pages of the literature of the world, knows not such another : a story which has been blessed to the salvation of thousands of poor sinners since Christ uttered it. God grant it may be blessed to the salvation of some poor sinner to-night !

And how begins the matchless story ? The words are familiar to all our ears ; but we are never weary of the sound of them.—“And He said, A certain man had two sons.”—Observe that there is skilful personal point in these words. Christ is about to give a portrait of the Pharisee and the Publican, in the close of the parable—but He reserves it to the close. He does not let the Pharisee see His intent, at first ; but concentrates all the interest upon the younger son—the Prodigal—the Publican.—“A certain man had two sons, and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me.” Just like the lads in our day, you know. They ask for their father’s money as if it were their own. “Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me.” How did he know that any of his father’s property would fall to him ? Why, because it was his father’s, to be sure. No

matter whether they have earned a penny of the money, the lads always expect to have it, if it be their father's. And if he be unwilling to give it to them, they will soon show him a piece of their mind, and tell him to his face, that he is a stingy old good-for-nothing, and ought to be ashamed of himself. And if he will not give it, they will tell it abroad, that the world may know what he is.

Remonstrance and good advice ? They don't want either : they have had too much of both, already. So Christ does not tell us how the father depicted here remonstrated with his younger son, and said, as many a father says—"My lad, you had better not have the money. You know you are very green and inexperienced, and know very little of human life. You may soon be led away by bad advisers, and lose the money. You had much better let it remain in my hands and increase, until you know how to take care of it." No : Christ does not tell us of any expostulation or friendly remonstrance on the part of the father—for such remonstrances, the Saviour knew, are usually vain—so He simply tell us that "He divided unto them his living"—and the wilful younger son is left to take his own way.

"He divided unto them his living." The words have a good deal of solemnity about them, if you think upon them a little. A youth brought up under the eye of a pious father, trained amidst family prayer and all pious observances, and treated

with the most loving and tender care by his earthly parent, visited also, often, by the Holy Spirit—listens to some evil lad whose companion he becomes, and soon grows discontented, and demands money from his father, that he may go and try to do the best for himself, as he says. Oh, how ruinous that day may be, when his father yields to him and “divides to him the living”! What a day of evil that may prove both for the soul and body of that discontented and corrupt youth!

“He divided unto them his living.” God often bears long with those who will not serve Him and love Him. He sends His Holy Spirit, for years, to strive with that sinful man, and to render him uneasy on account of his sins—to render his pillow a pillow of thorns when he places his guilty head upon it, at night—and to awake him with keen pangs of the accusing conscience, in the morning. But the sinner, at length, finds some other sinner more hardened than himself, and listening to that hardened sinner’s advice, resolves to try and stifle conscience. And God gives him up to his own evil will—“He divided unto them his living”—lets him go and find what sinful indulgence will do for him. An awful day for the sinner, when the Holy Spirit gives him up to hardness of heart, and ceases to strive with him! God grant it may never be the case with any unconverted man or woman here!

“And he divided unto them his living. And, not many days after”—it would not be many days after, for he was in a great hurry, this wilful younger son—“not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country”—determined to be out of his father’s sight—to have no more leading-strings or governance; but to set up for himself and be his own master—“a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living”—had his fill of sin—sinned up to the neck and wallowed in wickedness.—“And, when he had spent all”—he would not be long doing that with “riotous living”—“when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want.” Ay, ay, people who spend their money in riotous living, in our day, little calculate that the mighty famine may come; but a good many have bitterly proved it of late. God grant it may teach them wisdom!

“And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and *he* sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have stilled his hunger with the wild carobs that the swine did eat.” The young prodigal left his father’s house to sow his wild oats; and he finds, now, that he has sown them with a witness—for the sowing has produced a crop of degradation and shame—a harvest of hunger and wretchedness—and he would fain have shared the dinner of the swine, the fruit or pods of

the carob tree, which are so coarse that our old translators have rendered the word "husks."

"And no man gave unto him." What! did not the young roysterers, who had helped him to spend his fortune in riotous living, come to his help? Not one of them! And, if any of you young lads get a fortune and spend it, depend upon it, the young scapegraces who help you to spend it, will be the last to think of helping you, or relieving you. "Serve him right," they will say: "he was a great fool to throw his money away in the way he did, we all knew that."

Serious writers tell us that there is another and more recondite, but solemnly important meaning, in this part of the parable. When it is said that in his destitution he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, it is meant that the sinner when he has brought himself into deep trouble by his sin, often thinks he will give over sinning. He tries to serve the moral Law—the "citizen of that country"—but finds his attempt end in worse misery. For, so far from enabling him to give over sinning, the Law shows him what a wretched sinner he is. It sends him into the fields to feed swine. Shows him he is utterly undone and cannot give over sinning, by his own strength. That he is utterly helpless: "no man gave unto him": he can neither get forgiveness, nor power over sin.

"And when he came to himself"—How striking

the little words of Scripture, sometimes, are!—"When he came to himself." We are not ourselves while we are running on in sin. If there be any madness in the world, it is sin. What can be so insane as for a poor worm of the earth to defy his Maker and break God's laws? To show the Maker that, Almighty as He is, we defy Him—that although He can smite us with death in a moment we *will* defy Him; and, although He has never done us evil, but always good, and is the best friend we ever had, we will treat Him with scorn—I say, this is madness, and every sinner is really mad. "When he came to himself"—came to his right mind—came to understand how foolish he had been, how basely ungrateful and wicked—"he said, How many hired servants of my father have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!"

This is the sinner seeing his madness and folly in the true light. The prodigal thought it was a fine thing to leave his father's house, and be independent—to go where he liked and do as he liked, and spend his father's money in riot and wickedness; and now he sees his madness has brought him to hunger and starvation, and memory flies back to the home of plenty that he left, and to the thought that the lowliest servant in that house has bread enough and to spare, and he cries, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee; and am no

more worthy to be called thy son : make me as one of thy hired servants."

The prodigal son is thoroughly humbled and is a real penitent. He will tell his father of his entire unworthiness—he will ask to be employed in clearing out the stables and carrying fodder to the cattle—he will crave to be employed in doing the meanest household work—he feels that any humbling post is too good for him, and that he is so base and undeserving. This is always the feeling of the true penitent. The man who thinks he is not so very bad, is no true penitent. "I am the chief of sinners," said holy Paul, and that is sure to be the feeling of the man who is truly penitent. A good Quaker told me, once, how he visited a sick neighbour and began to talk to the man about soul-matters. Religion was all very good the poor sick man acknowledged—but he could not see what need he had to concern himself about it—for he had never done anybody any harm in his life. The good Quaker tried to convince him that he had lived without hope and without God in the world, and that he was not fit to die : that he had neither prayed nor worshipped, nor read his Bible, nor trained up his children in the fear of God, and he ought to feel himself a sinner in the sight of his Maker. The good Quaker knelt and prayed with him, and visited him again and again, and began to observe that the man gradually forgot to boast of his inno-

cence ; and, at last, seemed to be growing very tender—for he observed him in tears. At last, he could conceal his state no longer, but burst out into weeping—"I am too great a sinner," said he ; "there is no mercy for me !"

"Thank God !" said the good Quaker, "I have hope of thee now. Let us pray once more, and see if there be no mercy for thee." The Quaker prayed, and the poor sinner prayed ; and before they gave over, the sinner's soul was set free, and he rejoiced in the pardoning love of God.

Is there a poor sinner, here, who feels his vileness before God ? Whose heart is thoroughly stricken with the conviction that he is a sinner and a great sinner ? Then he is in the right way to find forgiveness for his sin. It must be thorough humility—for if we really feel what we have done—how we have acted—towards the greatest and best of beings, we shall never feel that we can be humbled enough for our sin. We shall feel it to be an unspeakable mercy that we are alive—that we are not utterly lost. We shall wonder at the goodness of God in sparing us through years of rebellion, and own that if he were to reject us, it would only be what we deserve.

But, did the Prodigal Son think his father would reject him ? Reject him ! There is not such a thought in his mind. It was confidence in his heart that his father would receive him that made him

cry, "I will arise, and go to my father." It is an exultant—not a despairing cry. Is there some poor sinner here who is despairing of finding forgiveness, and yet avowing that he deeply repents of his sin? My dear fellow-sinner, you cannot entertain a thought more dishonouring to God than that He will not forgive you. Despair is not true repentance. The man who truly repents is he who feels heart-broken because he has offended against the God and Father who loves him. He knows that God loves him, and he cannot forgive himself because he has offended against such matchless—such inexpressible love as God has bestowed upon him. It was the thought of the goodness he had experienced in his father's house, that made the prodigal feel his own baseness and foolishness, his ingratitude and madness. And it was his confidence in his father's heart of mercy—I repeat—that led him to cry, so exultantly, "I will arise and go to my father."

Oh, poor sinner—you who are feeling your own base ingratitude to God your Father—take up the prodigal's cry "I will arise and go to my father." Say unto Him, as the prodigal said, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee, and am not worthy to be called thy son." Should not God's goodness to you, in the past, encourage you to come? Has not your Heavenly Father done you good and not evil, all your life long, although you have rendered Him evil in return? Are you not—do you

not feel that you are—a monument of His mercy? And do you not feel that He has spared you, in order to save you? Are not all His promises Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus, to every returning sinner? Be resolved to say with the prodigal, “I will arise and go to my father.”

Remember, that if the poor prodigal had cast away confidence in his father's love, he must have perished. “No man gave unto him.” There was no other help for him. And if he had said, “I cannot go back and acknowledge my sin and shame, and let even the hired servants point the finger of scorn at me,” he must have perished. Nay—nay—he was truly repentant. He knew how basely he had acted, and he was resolved to own it. And if he had doubted his father's love, and said in his heart, “He will never forgive me,” he must have perished. My dear fellow-sinner, you must take up the poor prodigal's language with all your heart, if you really mean to be saved. You must exert your own will. God will not force you to be saved. He will not push you by the shoulders into heaven. The resolve to be saved must be your own. You will be guilty if you do not make the resolve; but, if you try God-will help you to make it. Take it up, cheerfully, my dear fellow-sinner! Take it up, exultantly—“I will arise and go to my father!”—The angels in heaven will rejoice—the Church of Christ will rejoice—Christ Himself will rejoice when

He sees of the travail of his soul and is satisfied—
The Holy Spirit will rejoice Who has striven with thee
so often and so long, poor stubborn-hearted sinner—
God the Father will rejoice at the return of His poor,
wandering, sinful child—for look how the Saviour
affirms it !

Don't put off the resolve till another time. Look
at the prodigal and imitate him—"And he arose
and came to his father." He did not say he would
consider of it. He did not say he would go next
week. If you put it off, my dear friend, the Holy
Spirit may leave you. Resolve just now, while He
strives with you. Say the words with all your
heart, just now, "I will arise and go to my Father."
Look at the blessed encouragement the Saviour
gives you—"When he was yet a great way off, his
father saw him, and had compassion and ran, and
fell on his neck and kissed him." Thou hast been
a long way off, poor sinner, but God has been
looking for thy return. The prodigal's father had
gone out thinking, "Where is this poor lost lad
of mine, I wonder ! Oh, what has become of him ?
He knew nothing of the world, and he may have
got into the hands of sharpers who have robbed him
of his money, and he may be now in rags." And
yonder he saw him, at last, coming miserably along
the road, and in rags, sure enough ; but the father
"had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck, and
kissed him."

Thou art in the rags and wretchedness of sin, poor sinner, but thy Heavenly Father's heart is filled with compassion towards thee—only come : He is waiting to receive thee with joy and love. “ And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son : make ”—nay, the father will not let him say those words, “ make me as one of thy hired servants ”—the father will not let him utter them. “ But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet ”—Depend upon it, the poor wilful prodigal was in a wretched shabby condition—ragged and shoeless—“ and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it,”—Oh what words for the poor hunger-bitten wandering lad to hear ! —“ and let us eat, and be merry. For this my son was dead, and is alive again : he was lost and is found. And they began to be merry.”

Oh, what a blessed picture has the Saviour thus drawn us of His Father's heart of mercy and forgiveness ! Surely, there is not a heart here but will acknowledge such love and mercy—surely, we are all disposed to be returning sinners, and come back to the Heavenly Father Who thus loves us and is willing to receive us. Do not delay ; you have been wandering afar off. God waits to make you His regenerate children. He will put the best robe on you—the robe of Christ's righteousness. He

will put a ring on your hand—for you shall be married to Christ—united to Him and made His own. He will put shoes on your feet. Your steps shall be ordered and sure. You shall be no longer a wanderer, but walk before Him in holiness and newness of life. May God help every poor sinner in His presence to accept His mercy, even at this moment !

Ah ! but there is a sequel to this tale of mercy. Christ has to apply the parable, now, to the murmurers. He has beheld their excited looks during the time he has been telling them this wondrous story ; and perhaps, some of them have perceived that he was pointing to the poor publicans and sinners while depicting the prodigal. But Christ means to give the scornful, self-righteous Pharisees their own picture, now. He means to come down upon them, and in such a manner as shall touch them to the quick, and make them feel ashamed of their guilty pride and self-righteousness—if they can be moved to feel any shame at all.

“ Now, his elder son was in the field, and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.”

His dignity is offended. What strangers can have entered the house to make this rabble riot without his leave and his knowledge ? What does this unlicensed mirth mean ?—he wants to know. “ And

he (the servant) said unto him, Thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound." The servant evidently thinks he will not only be surprised but feel pleased. "Thy brother is come"—says the servant, meaning to touch his heart and fill him with delight. But like many other elder brothers in our own day, he had no wish to see the younger brother come back. He would have been well content that he never came back. Just so the self-righteous Pharisee cares nothing about poor sinners being converted. "If they be wasting their money, the scamps!" he thinks, "they will soon spend all they have, and then they will starve—and they will deserve it." If he hears a common swearer pouring out oaths and imprecations in the street, the Pharisee will wish some judgment may fall upon him. And if he sees a poor drunkard fall in the street, he will call him a brute beast and pass him in scorn. The truly religious man will rather weep at what he hears and sees, and feel his heart melt with pity, that his poor fellow-creatures should so sorely disgrace and degrade themselves.

But this elder brother has no pity. He is none of your tender-hearted brothers. "And he was angry and would not go in. Therefore"—"Therefore" what? How did Christ treat these murmuring Pharisees. I had one sceptical friend who was ex-

ceedingly sharp in his observations on the character of the Saviour. "Jesus Christ was not a gentleman," he would say; "He called the Pharisees and Scribes liars and hypocrites; and that is not gentlemanly language." He called them so, because they *were* so—I replied—for a true gentleman must speak the truth." "He might have used more gentlemanly language and less harshness," returned my sceptical friend.

But is the Saviour harsh with the Pharisees, in the story before us? "Therefore" it relates—"therefore, came his father out, and entreated him." God entreats the self-righteous Pharisee! Jesus is enforcing the lesson, and applying it to the murmuring Pharisees, in order to convince them, if they will be convinced; and so far from showing that they deserve harshness, He represents His Heavenly Father as entreating them to put away their pride, and begin to care for poor sinners. "Therefore came his father out and entreated him." But the entreaty is all in vain. "And he, answering, said to his father, Lo these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I, at any time, thy commandment"—Hark, at the self-righteous Pharisee! How perfect he is, in his own estimation!—"and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends"—He has had his father's house at his command and done as he liked in it—for he wondered that any one dared to come thither with

out his leave—and yet the ungrateful wretch asserts he has never had any real kindness from his father in his life—“and yet, thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends”—he throws his father’s goodness in his teeth, and counts it worth nothing!

If the elder brother treats his father thus, what may we expect he will say about his poor wandering younger brother? “But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.” He vents all the power of malicious feeling upon him, like a true Pharisee.

How did Christ treat the Pharisees? Does He use harshness and nothing but harshness in dealing with them? Let the rich closing words of the chapter answer. “And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.”—Poor narrow-hearted Pharisee! there’s enough for thee and all the sinners on earth, in My mercy. “All that I have is thine”—enjoy it all—thou canst never exhaust My mercy, or impoverish My goodness—“it was meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for this *thy brother*”—see how the father reminds him of the relationship: he had said in scorn “as soon as this *thy son* was come”—refusing to acknowledge him as a brother—“for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.” What a lesson of mercy and good-

ness—of pity and love ! Surely, it reached the hearts of some of the Pharisees.

Surely, I have no cold, narrow-hearted Pharisee here, who treats poor sinners with scorn. Oh, I think there is nothing which ought to draw out our pity, so much as the sight of a man who is ruining himself by sin. And if pity does not move us, we ought to remember that it is only by God's mercy we differ from the sinner. Some of you will call to mind the saying of one of the old martyrs—Praying Bradford, as he was called : “ I never see a man going to be hanged,” he used to say, “ but I think there goes John Bradford, if it were not for the grace of God ! ”

Oh, let none of us imagine that we are so much better than other people. We are bad enough, every one of us. And have all need to cry with the poor Publican that smote upon his breast, “ God be merciful to me a sinner ! ”

Is there any poor sinner here to-night convinced that he *is* a sinner, and who is desirous of leaving his sins ? Let me entreat you to cry with the Prodigal Son, “ I will arise and go to my father ! ” God help you so to cry—and if you do arise and go to Him, depend upon it, the Father will meet you with compassion. You cannot have too great confidence that God will save you, if you are resolved to leave sin. Tell your Heavenly Father that you know all things are ready, in Christ, and you are sure He

will forgive you for Jesu's sake. Come just now, to God. Remember, the Prodigal Son went at once. Don't throw a moment away—for happiness awaits you, and there will be joy in heaven and on earth at your return. God help you and save you for Christ's sake ! Amen.

XV.

THE BOLDNESS OF FAITH.

[A Discourse delivered in London and various parts of the Country.]

“Let us, therefore, come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”—HEB. iv. 16.

WE commonly speak of the Epistle to the Hebrews as an undoubted production of St. Paul, just as we speak of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, or Corinthians. And, in the revised version, as well as in our common translation, it is styled, ‘The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews.’ Yet, this title is more than questionable. Some of the early Fathers attributed the authorship of this most eloquent and valuable letter to Clement of Rome ; and one asserts that although the thoughts may be Paul's, the language is Luke's. But that must be a mistake, for there is no gorgeous eloquence, either in St. Luke's Gospel, or in the Acts of the Apostles : in other words, there is nothing in either comparable to the brilliant writing of this treatise.

Origen and Clement of Alexandria, in the third century, speak of Paul as the author ; but, in the same century, Tertullian says the author was Barnabas ; and all the Latin Fathers of the third century reject the opinion that St. Paul is the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. So does Jerome, in the fourth century ; and he is generally held to be the most learned of all the ancient Fathers.

At the period of the Reformation, the great Greek scholar of the time, Erasmus—the man who edited the first printed Greek Testament—utterly denied the authorship of St. Paul for this Epistle ; and so did Luther and Calvin—and they were no mean scholars. But Luther put forth a new opinion : an opinion, be it observed, which finds great favour with many scholars of our own times. Martin Luther expressed a belief that this most precious ‘Epistle to the Hebrews’ is the work of Apollos : that eloquent and learned Jew of Alexandria, who is described, in the 18th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, as “mighty in the Scriptures,” and of whom it is related that he entered boldly into the synagogue at Ephesus, and taught what he believed to be full Christian truth, until Aquila and Priscilla, two of Paul’s co-workers, instructed him more perfectly. And that, afterwards, he passed from Ephesus, the metropolis of the Lesser Asia, as it was called, to populous Corinth, which was, at that time, the real capital of Greece ; and that,

in Corinth, he “helped them much who had believed through grace—for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures, that Jesus was Christ.” Indeed his converts at Corinth seem to have divided the Christian Church with the converts of St. Paul—for some said “I am of Paul” and others said “I am of Apollos.”

The wondrous power of expression, the magnificence of style and richness of language, displayed in this Epistle, seem clearly to denote that it is the composition—not of a logician, like St. Paul—but of a first-rate orator, such as Apollos is described to have been. This is perhaps the chief reason why many scholars and critics of the present day have given in their opinion that Martin Luther is most probably right, and that the Epistle to the Hebrews is, really, the work of Apollos, the eloquent Jew of Alexandria.

Listen to the magnificent opening of the Epistle :—

“God, who, at sundry times, and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things ;—by Whom, also, He made the worlds ;—Who being the effulgence of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high ;—being made so much better

than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

“For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son?

“And again, when He bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.

“And, of the angels He saith, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.

“But, unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom.”

I have ventured to repeat the whole of this most splendid exordium to you, not only because it is the most eloquent opening of any book of the New Testament; but, because one may really say that the British Public—if they may, in general, be reckoned readers of the New Testament—seem unaware of the fact that there is such a passage of eloquence in the book. For, who ever talks of the “splendid opening of the Epistle to the Hebrews”? I never heard any one—either in the office of a preacher, or any other person—denote that he knew that there was any measure of eloquence to be found in that part of the New Testament.

And how does the eloquent Apollos—the man mighty in the Scriptures—follow up this grand and

stately introduction of One Whom he thus shows us is a Divine Personage—"the effulgence of the Father's glory, and the express image of His Person?" He boldly draws aside the veil from before the eyes of his own people the Jews—for he is writing expressly to them, remember—and shows them the clear and distinct fact that Jesus has realised the principal figure in their great typical system of sacrifice and atonement—the entry of the High Priest, once a year, into the Holy of Holies, to sprinkle all things with blood, and make atonement for the sins of the people.

Read the 16th chapter of Leviticus for yourselves—for it is too dry a portion of the old economy for me to read, in the pulpit—and you will learn how fully "the man mighty in the Scriptures" had comprehended the spiritual bearing and meaning of the slaughter of the bullock for the priest and his family—the killing of the goat and the sprinkling of his blood on the scape-goat that was sent into the wilderness—and then the thrilling and solemn entry of the High Priest within the Veil, and his sprinkling of all things there—the altar of incense—even the cherubim—with the typical blood of atonement.

So, he shows them Christ is entered into the Holy of Holies above, not with the blood of bulls and goats, but with the virtue of His own blood,—not entering thither once a year to make a new offering, but abiding there as the great intercessor for sinners,

and therefore, being able to save sinners to the uttermost because he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

And that, in order to constitute Himself such a High Priest, He had to lay aside His glory and majesty, and take upon Him our human nature, and become acquainted with all its weaknesses and trials. And thus, Apollos tells us, that, "in the days of His flesh" our great Atoning One "offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears." Nay, he assures us that our great High Priest became perfect through sufferings.

"Seeing then," says he, "that we have a great High Priest that has passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For, we have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

"Boldly!—boldly!"—"Is it not a mistranslation, or a mistake of some kind, think you?" repeats some poor contrite penitent. "I'm sure I can never come boldly to the throne of grace—such a guilty sinner as I am. Oh, when I look at my sins, I am frightened at the very remembrance of them! I'm sure I can never *presume* to come boldly to the throne of grace."

Of course you cannot *presume* to come, my dear fellow-sinner ; and it is not the boldness of *presumption* with which God's word directs you to come. In order to prevent our making any mistake in trying to practise the boldness which is recommended in the text—

I. Let us consider what kind of boldness it is *not*, which we are to practise :

II. What kind of boldness *it is* : and

III. What we are to gain by practising this Scriptural boldness.

You see I have made the divisions of my discourse as plain as any old Puritan divine would have made them, two hundred years ago ; and I humbly think it would be better if we had more of the old Puritan plainness among us.

I. Then, I am to try to show all who have any concern for their spiritual state what this Scriptural boldness with which we are to come to the throne of grace—is *not*.

1. It is not, as I said before, the boldness of Presumption which the writer is recommending. Terms of familiarity are sometimes employed in prayer which, one would think, no rightly constituted mind could use. Terms which seem to imply a forgetfulness of the fact that we are all sinners, and that God is the High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity. It is an act of presumption to approach the Almighty and Infinite Creator

without the lowliest reverence. Even the commonplace tone in which public prayer is sometimes uttered, and the haste with which the Lord's Prayer is muttered, and the business-like way in which the "Grace" is despatched, at table—seem to me all—all—all wrong. The slightest degree of irreverence in the language and manner of poor, guilty sinners addressing their Maker seems, to me, sorely out of place and character. Surely, it should be remembered that it *is* a "throne" to which we are coming: that is to say, it is the seat of a king. And, if the throne of an earthly king should not be approached without homage and obeisance, surely the throne of the King of kings—of the Lord and Giver of life—of the Being who made all things and supports all things—of the dread Being of whom Isaiah tells us that He "measures the waters in the hollow of His hand, and metes out heaven with a span, and comprehends the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance"—that, to Him "the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance,"—and that He "taketh up the isles as a very little thing"—I say assuredly, the throne of such a Being should be approached by poor sinners with lowly hearts and lowly words, and never with the boldness of presumption.

2. Neither should we dare to come to our Maker's throne with the boldness of Ignorance. Our ignor-

ance often leads us to Presumption. I believe there is far more wilful ignorance—I say wilful ignorance—among men respecting God, than some people suppose. I mean ignorance of the God of the Bible. For, as for the God of Nature, we seldom hear of Him, now. The Philosophers of our day have taught us to ignore His existence. And what real, wilful ignorance there is among the men who call themselves “Secularists” about the Deity as He is taught in the Bible. You will hear them make quotations which refer to Him, in the most vulgar scoffing spirit, and put an interpretation on the words which they know to be wilfully false. But, let it be fully kept in mind, that we who believe the Bible, and profess to have that knowledge of God which the Bible teaches, should endeavour to spread it, so that all who come to the throne of grace may never dare to approach it with the boldness of Ignorance.

3. Nor, again, should we dare to come to our Maker’s footstool with the boldness of Pomposity and conceit. Oh, I would sooner hear the prayer of ignorance than of pomposity. I would rather listen to the prayer of a poor uneducated man whose language verged on impropriety, than hear the language of mock-homage: the prayer of a man who tries to string a great number of three- or four-syllabled sounding words together, in order to compliment the Almighty on the greatness of His

attributes. Our Maker looks for none of our compliments. He knows, millions of times better than we can tell Him, how great He is. We had, far better try to feel our own littleness, than to express, in pompous terms, His greatness.

4. Above all, we are not to come to the throne of grace with the boldness of Self-righteousness. The way, you know, that the Pharisee came, in the parable—"God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week ; I give tythes of all that I possess." He seems to have thought that if he gave back to God a few thimblefuls of all that God had given him, he ought to be reckoned very good.

Oh no, it is not the boldness of self-righteousness that this valuable writer is recommending. He knew that nothing can be more fatal to the success of any petition that we present before God, than for us to present it self-righteously. Nothing is so likely to harden the heart and render it unsusceptible of God's mercy and grace, as a spirit of self-righteousness. He that comes to the throne self-righteously, comes boastingly. He does not feel that he needs anything. Holiness ? he is not seeking for holiness : he is holy already, in his own estimation. What can he need who believes himself to be already full of excellences ? What can he need who is already perfect ?

How blinding is self-righteousness!—nay its blindness is the result of our fallen nature. We are all prone to it. I have never found more than a few of the very best men in the world who could conceal their good deeds. We all like to talk about the good we think we have done, and to parade it, if it be but modestly. That practice of modest parade, however, will increase upon us, if we do not take care, till it renders us objects of dislike to some, and of open ridicule to others.

Self-righteousness is a hideous sin, if we see it in the right light. Paying our Maker for His goodness to us! Doing deeds of supererogation. So the Pharisee thought whom Christ describes: "I give thythes of all that I possess": I pay Thee back, Lord, for Thy goodness! Oh no, it is not the boldness of self-righteousness with which we are to come to the throne of grace.

II. Let us hasten to consider, then, What kind of boldness it is with which we are to come.

I. First and foremost, it is the boldness which arises from the sense of our need. But, now, we meet the difficulty which confronts us when we strive to awaken men to a sense of their need. Men sit under the sound of the Gospel for long years, and never seem to awake up spiritually. They remain in a dead sleep of sin, although they are told faithfully and frequently of their sins. They can bear severe probings of conscience and

never wince. Their earthliness may be exposed, their selfishness, their sensuality—but they are unmoved and remain unmoved.

Once get men to feel that they are sinners, and to feel it thoroughly, and you will soon hear of it, and see it, too. Conviction for sin—deep, heartfelt conviction of a man's guilt before God—is sure to make itself known. It is that conviction of sin which men cannot conceal that proves the reality of their conviction. And then comes the cry for mercy—"Lord, I'm a sinner—be merciful to me, or I shall be ruined!" "For shame!" says the man's respectable self-righteous neighbour, who hears the sinner's vehement prayer—"go into your chamber, and don't cry out in that vulgar way; or wait till the evening and say your prayers at bed-time, as other respectable people do." "Nay," says the needy soul, "I want mercy now. I may die before bed-time. I've tried long enough to be respectable; but it has not saved me, and it never will save me. So I'm coming boldly to the throne of grace. I can't delay. I want deliverance!"

How is it that we hear so much *respectable* objection to men's crying out for mercy when they feel they are sinners? A man in the midst of a storm, on a wild heath, at midnight, if he sees a dim light tries to reach it—and if it comes from a cottage window, he never thinks of knocking *respectably* at the door, but he knocks loudly and cries

out with all his might, "Let me in! I'm perishing!"

Why should not the hunger of the soul for the pardon of sin, compel me to cry out, as does the hunger of the body for food? Turn to that thrilling page of Carlyle's 'French Revolution,' and listen to the cry of thousands in the streets of Paris, at midnight! "Pain!—pain!—pain!" they shouted (Bread!—bread!—bread!). Oh how the trembling *noblesse* and *bourgeoisie* woke up in terror—knowing the Revolution was come. Oh for a cry like that for the pardon of sin, in the streets of London! Do you think it will never come? Are we perpetually to go on in this poor, dreamy way? Nay, nay: it will come as surely as the Holy Spirit reaches the heart of Man: it will come—the day when thousands shall feel God's holy power, and be compelled to cry for mercy.

2. The soul that comes in this way soon learns to come with another kind of boldness: the Boldness of Reliance on the Saviour's Invitations. He hears Christ, so sweetly saying, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls; for My yoke is easy and My burthen is light."

"Yes, Lord," says the earnest soul, "I know that Thy yoke is easy and Thy burthen is light, and I

want to experience what it is to carry them ; but I am laden with this heavy yoke of my sin. Yet, as Thou hast invited me to come to Thee, I'll try to come!" But, how often the poor labouring soul shrinks back in the attempt to come to Christ! The old, troublesome thoughts come back again. "Oh, I cannot presume to come—I'm not fit to come—I want a better preparation and deeper repentance before I come."

But, my dear fellow-sinner, Christ does not say you are not fit to come. His invitation is to all who labour and feel heavy laden with the weight of their sins, and so you are the very person He calls. And He does not say you need a better preparation and deeper repentance before you come to Him. Where is it written that He says so? "Yes, yes, you are a sinner sure enough ; but you must weep more and be more sorrowful before I relieve you. Don't think you are to have mercy just when you ask for it. How many months have you spent in repentance? Get away into some solitary place and cry for mercy until you feel you have no strength left to cry any longer. Get away, I say, and sigh and weep and mortify yourself with fasting, and pray whole nights—and think yourself well off if you find mercy in a few years!"

My dear fellow-sinner, thank God! there is no such language as that in the Bible! "Come!" is the language always ; and it is never—Come,

when you are more fit—Come, next week—Come, next month—no, nor even, Come to-morrow. To-day, is always the tone of the invitation. Come, then, all who need Christ with the Boldness of Reliance on His Own invitations.

3. Come, also, with the Boldness of Trust in God's Promises and Confidence in His faithfulness. Do you not remember how it is written that He proclaimed Himself to Moses in the Mount, as "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,—keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin"? And the Psalmist declares that "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger," and that He is "plenteous in mercy." Oh, if God were not "plenteous in mercy," what would become of the human race? Think of the sin and wickedness God has had to look upon in this earth for long ages! He sees all things, every moment! And, if any good man could see all the sin that is being committed on this earth at this moment, he would shudder with horror at the sight. What then must the Holy Jehovah feel, Who has beheld this sight of horror every moment since sin came into the world? Yet He is still "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy and truth." He is still "plenteous in mercy"! He still cries to the wicked, as He did in the time of His prophet Isaiah, "Come, now,

and let us reason together : though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow : though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth : for I am God, and there is none else." "I bring near My righteousness ; it shall not be far off, and My salvation shall not tarry." "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts ; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him ; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." Surely, with such declarations on God's part, every poor contrite sinner ought to come to the throne of grace with the boldness of Trust in God's Promises and confidence in His faithfulness. Yea, such promises should surely encourage every penitent sinner to come to the throne of grace with the boldness of Faith.

4. Ay, this is the most prevalent of all kinds of boldness at the throne of grace : the Boldness of Faith. But what, really, *is* Faith?—some are asking. "In the 11th chapter of the superb treatise from which your text is taken, we read, 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for'—but we cannot see the meaning of that expression." And, my good souls, I tell you, honestly, that I do not wonder at what you say. Please bear with me and attend closely to me, while I attempt a little critical explanation.

First, understand that the translation is a true one—only, our good old translators have used the word *substance* in its metaphysical, and not in its vulgar sense. “There is some substance in this cloth,” you say, feeling a man’s sleeve. But, you know that way of using the word *substance* gives no meaning to the text. Listen! I have, most likely, a Latin scholar or two here. They will understand me when I say *sub stans*: reverse the words and you have *stans sub*—that is to say, *standing under*. Use the Greek word in the text ὑπόστασις the same way, *stasis hypo*, if you reverse the syllables as before; and you have again *standing under*. Now, this is the great vital question men asked in old time—“What is the *standing under*?” We want to get out of our puzzle. Solve the mystery of Nature for us. You present us with a board, and you talk of mere phenomena, or appearances, for you say it has length and breadth and thickness—but what really *is* the piece of board? “Matter,” you reply; and think you have given an answer which ought to satisfy the most critical inquirer. But it does not satisfy anybody who thinks. “But what *is* Matter? what is the *standing under* in Nature? Tell us what is the *reality*.” “It is the *standing under*,” you reply: “it is the only answer I can give you.” Thus, the word *hypostasis* has come to be employed for *reality*.

So, when the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews

says "Faith is the substance of things hoped for," does he mean "assurance," as the new translators say? No: for the Christian Church has knocked that word about, till they have made it mean anything, and we had better leave off using it. No: the true, full, and right translation of the important passage we are talking about is—"Faith is the *realisation* of things hoped for."

"It is Christ that I want," says the penitent soul; "all the promises are Yea and Amen in Him. What am I waiting for?" asks the penitent soul, with the boldness of Faith: "the Saviour offers me all I want. They are His own blessed words: "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "*Whosoever?* Then I am the very soul, and I will rest upon my Saviour's declaration, and I'll keep my hold of it. None shall drive me from it, or argue, or cozen me, out of it. I am to come boldly to the throne of grace, and I am coming with the boldness of faith. *Whosoever!*—Thou hast said it, blessed Lord, and I believe it and *will* believe it."

"Ah," says some disconsolate soul, "I have tried so to believe, and have supposed it was all right with me. But, in a day or two, I found I was mistaken. I found I really did not believe."

My dear fellow-sinner, you have been playing at believing: trying it, to see how it would succeed.

You will never get salvation that way. If you are always going back to look at your sins instead of your Saviour, you will never get right. Do remember that you are coming to a throne of grace : not a throne of indignation, or of abstract justice. Mark how that real penitent and real believer finds deliverance. He is in an agony of sorrow and almost in an agony of despair. But after wrestling with his doubts and feeling terrified at the heinousness of his sins and their great demerit, he resolves to perish believing, if he must perish, and he casts himself, in desperation, on the mercy of God, through the atonement of Christ. And so he succeeds. There is no other way ; and he soon feels he has taken the right way. His faith is indeed the *realisation* of things hoped for.

He took the Saviour at His word ; and, in the same way any other poor sinner who is present, to-night, and feels the burthen of sin and guilt to be grievous, may be released from it. “Whosoever” is the word, remember, in that precious declaration of the Saviour. Lay hold of it, with the boldness of faith, and you will also find mercy and grace to help in *your* time of need. Only believe with all your heart, in the Saviour, and you are sure to feel that faith is the realisation of things hoped for—for by the boldness of faith you will be able to realise the pardon of sin, and glorify God for it.

Hark!—hush! From whom came that suppressed groan—that stifled sigh? Oh, it was from

the heart of that poor backslider. "How can I come boldly to the throne of grace?" he is saying; "I that have crucified Christ afresh, and put Him to open shame! Oh, no, there's no mercy or grace for me. I have listened to the promises you have quoted from the Bible—but they only serve to torture me. I have sinned away my day of grace." Nay, nay, not while thou art alive and Christ lives to plead for thee—not while God gives thee breath and offers mercy to the man who can only cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Where, in the blessed Gospel, is it ever said that Christ turned away any human soul that acknowledged its sin? Where is it said, in the Gospel, that when the Saviour, after His resurrection, gave His Apostles their commission to go and preach the Gospel, that He charged them to preach it only to moderate sinners—to small sinners—to sinners who only sinned in a whisper, and never did much harm in the world?

Remember what St. Luke tells us in the close of his Gospel: that Christ charged His disciples to "preach repentance and remission of sins among all nations, *beginning at Jerusalem*." "Beginning at Jerusalem"? Why, then, He meant that salvation should be offered to the guiltiest of all sinners, *first*. It is as if the Saviour had said, "Go, and find out the priestly traffickers in blood, who paid Judas the thirty pieces of silver for betraying Me, and tell them that there's grace and mercy, even for them!"

“Beginning at Jerusalem”: go, and find out the unfeeling official who smote Me on the face in the presence of the high-priest, Caïaphas, and tell him that there’s grace and mercy, for him! “Beginning at Jerusalem”: go, and find out them who mocked and derided Me, as I hung upon the cross, and say there’s mercy and grace, for them! “Beginning at Jerusalem”: go, and find out the hardened Roman soldiers who spat upon Me, and blindfolded and buffeted Me, and put on Me the purple robe, and in mockery bowed the knee to Me, and tell them that there’s mercy and grace, for them! “Beginning at Jerusalem”: go and find out the men who plaited the crown of thorns, and thrust it upon My brow, and tell them there’s grace and mercy, for them! “Beginning at Jerusalem”: go and find out the men who drove the nails into My hands and feet, upon the cruel cross, and tell them there’s mercy and grace, even for them!

Oh, while it is recorded that Jesus directed His disciples to preach remission of sins, in the very first act, to the vilest sinners of all, canst thou despair, poor backslider? Oh, if thou hast defiled thy soul with adultery and murder, since God pardoned David, cannot He pardon thee? If thou has denied thy Lord with oaths and curses, since God pardoned Peter, cannot He pardon thee? Did He not assure the backsliding Israelites, again and again, that if they would return unto Him, He would heal their

backslidings, and love them freely? And dost thou forget that Jehovah is the Unchangeable One?

Come!—this is thy time of need, backslider. Accept the invitation, now—for I preach unto thee, at this moment, repentance and remission of sins, in the Name of Him who died for thee—in the Name of Him who shed His blood for thee. May the Lord help thee to feel that this is, indeed, thy time of need, and help thee to come to the throne of grace and find mercy!

“Don’t forget me!” says some poor, weak, trembling and fearing, and sometimes stumbling child of God. “I almost think, sometimes, that I shall have to give it up, and be classed with backsliders. For I get wrong so often: I promise the Lord, so often, to be better, and then, instead, I grow worse: I listen so often to the voice of temptation, although I know it to be wrong, and I’m sure to get wrong, if I listen to it”—Stop, stop, my poor weak brother, and look at one word in the text. “Let us, *therefore*.” “Therefore,” sir! “Why that’s a very insignificant word. A lawyer’s word, as we call it: therefore, and wherefore, and nevertheless and notwithstanding, and a score of similar words. You know, the lawyers ring changes upon them, when they make your Will, or a Deed of Conveyance.” Ay, ay, but a lawyer will show you that there is often a deal of importance in what you call that insignificant word in the Will. Take care

that you never throw away your “therefores” and “wherefores,” whenever you meet them in Scripture. They are often of more worth than you imagine. Think of that splendid “therefore,” in the first verse of the 8th of Romans. “There is, *therefore*, now, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” Think of the miserable confession poor Paul has been making of his state, in the 7th chapter—“I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing. For to will is present with me ; but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would, I do not ; but the evil that I would not, that I do. . . . I find a law that when I would do good, evil is present with me. . . . I see a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin. . . . O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?” And then, suddenly seeing the way of escape, he exclaims, “I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord !” And he takes a running jump of faith, and clears the gap between the 7th chapter of Romans and the 8th in a moment—for he lands, safe, on the other side, and triumphantly exclaims, “There is, *therefore*, now, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus !”

Now, my dear tempted and tried brother, mark the word that leads in the meaning of the text—“Let us, *therefore*, come boldly”—but why ? “For

we have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." That is the *therefore* ; and remember it, poor tried and tempted child of God. You are full of infirmities. But "we have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." *Therefore*, you are to come boldly to the throne of grace. You are tempted. So was He. *Therefore*, you are to come boldly to the throne of grace. "Ah !" say you, "but I am so very much tempted !" Yea, but He "was in all points tempted like as we are ?" *Therefore*, you are to come boldly to the throne of grace. You are tempted to doubt that you are a child of God ; and you are even driven to fear that you will have to "give it up," as you say. Do you think Jesus was never tempted to give up His struggle for Man's salvation ?

Christian believer ! you who know by long experience that Faith is the realisation of things hoped for, keep on believing to the end—for I must now come to an end as soon as possible—the time being nearly gone. I must say little on the third head.

III. What are we to gain by practising this Christian boldness ?—"Mercy, and grace to help us in the time of need." And does not that comprehend all that we shall want as long as we are on earth ? You have heard the text preached from often, it may be ; and you remember how the time of

need was described as the time of temporal difficulty—the time of temptation—the time of sickness—the time of danger—the time of death. Think of all these, and expand them in your own thoughts when you get home ; and God help you and help us all, ever to come boldly, through the Saviour, to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in the time of need.

XVI.

THE ORIGIN OF MAN.

THIS is still the great philosophical moot-point of the day. Of course, the party which, for the present, hold sway, is the party of Evolution—the doctrine of Lamarck, and Hæckel, and Darwin. But, there are a few distinguished men who refuse to yield up their independence of thought, and join the “popular” cry, because it is called “popular.” Among these is the profound and intelligent linguist, Max Müller.

I mentioned, at page 154 of this volume, that “Darwin found the black natives of Terra del Fuego—the extreme south of America—perfectly naked, and sleeping on the ground without any covering.” With very deep interest, I have just now read a little paper, concerning these Fuegians, by the Rev. W. R. Stevenson, in the March number of our little *General Baptist Magazine*; and a most valuable statement concerning them, by Max Müller, in the first number of the *Nineteenth Century* for the present year. I have also procured Mr. Young’s valuable missionary volume, entitled “Light in Lands

of Darkness," and have read *his* statement with thankfulness.

To one who, like my poor self, has been, for the last ten years, doing all that he can, by plain speaking, to stem the torrent of Scepticism in the guise of Evolution, these several publications have given deep joy. For, I have had many "stones in the other pocket," as we say in old Lincolnshire. A little time ago, after a lecture exposing the fallacy of Evolution, in one of the chapels in Lancashire, a friend came to me and said that the minister of another chapel was present, and told his mind to this friend before he went home: "I would have defended Darwin's doctrine all the way through," said he, "if the lecturer would have given me leave." "Thank God," said I, "that he has gone home without asking me for leave to spread error."

"But is it Error?" is the pertinacious question asked me by scores of young men, many of whom are members of Christian churches. And some of their ministers, they tell me, are bold to maintain that a man may be a good Christian, and yet hold the whole of Darwin's doctrines to be true. Nay, I have been told by several credible witnesses, who have a high admiration for one who may be called the leading Dissenting minister of the Midlands, that he has openly and unreservedly declared his belief before his congregation, that Man comes out of the Apes!

Let no one mock at an old man, when he tells them that all this causes him grief. He fell into error in his past life, and therefore he cultivates no unkindness towards them who fall into error; but he is thankful that his common-sense has protected him from holding, even in any modified shape, the absurd fallacy that Man is only an improved Ape.

But I leave this gossip—which I beg the reader to excuse—and proceed to the point I have in view. In his very interesting book, entitled “A Naturalist’s Voyage round the World,” Mr. Darwin thus gives us his impressions of what, in 1832, he saw of the natives of Terra del Fuego” :—

“It was without exception the most curious and interesting spectacle I ever beheld. I could not have believed how wide was the difference between the savage and civilized man: it is greater than between a wild and domesticated animal, inasmuch as in man there is a greater power of improvement.

“The language of these people, according to our notions, scarcely deserves to be called articulate. Captain Cook has compared it to a man clearing his throat; but certainly no European ever cleared his throat with so many hoarse, guttural, and clicking sounds.

“These poor wretches were stunted in their growth; their hideous faces were bedaubed with white paint, their skins filthy and greasy, their hair entangled, their voices discordant, and their gestures

violent. Viewing such men, one can hardly make oneself believe that they are fellow-creatures, and inhabitants of the same world. It is a common subject of conjecture what pleasure in life some of the lower animals can enjoy; how much more reasonably the same question may be asked with respect to these barbarians.

“The different tribes when at war are cannibals. From the concurrent but quite independent evidence of the boy taken by Mr. Low, and of Jemmy Button (the chief of the tribe), it is certainly true that when pressed in winter by hunger they kill and devour their old women before they kill their dogs.

“I believe in this extreme part of America Man exists in a lower state of improvement than in any other part of the world.”

So much for the young philosopher's opinion of what he saw in 1832, and of what he thought it proved. The idea that a few Christian missionaries could improve these savages never seems to have entered his mind. And yet, during that same voyage in the *Beagle*, he visited New Zealand, and thus writes of what he saw there:—

“The lesson of the Missionary is the enchanter's wand. . . . To think that this was the centre of the land of cannibalism, murder, and all atrocious crimes! I took leave of the missionaries with thankfulness for their kind welcome, and with

feelings of high respect for their gentlemanlike, useful, and upright character. I think it would be difficult to find a body of men better adapted for the high office which they fulfil."

It is gratifying to learn that the philosopher, in after-life, had the pleasurable surprise of knowing that even Fuegian savages were not beyond the transforming influences of Christianity. What missionaries endured before they succeeded—how some perished of hunger—how others were massacred by the clubs of the natives, I must leave the reader to learn from Mr. Young's book. I can assure him that he will find he never read a more heart-thrilling narrative in his life. They educated a few children of these poor savages, and so, at length, learnt the language of some of the Fuegians, and by perseverance of the most extraordinary character, made their way clear. And now, what shall be said?—for I must cut the story short—the Church of England has established a mission, and—

"In 1872, Bishop Stirling, assisted by Mr. Bridges, at one service baptized thirty-six adults and children, and joined seven couples in Christian marriage. It was a day to be remembered. The baptized organized evening worship spontaneously, and met in each other's houses for prayer and praise.

"Since then the work has steadily progressed. There is now a Christian village. Instead of the miserable wigwams, cottages have been erected,

gardens have been planted and fenced, roads have been made, cattle and goats have been introduced ; an orphanage containing twenty-six children, clothed fed, and educated at the expense of friends in England, has been erected ; polygamy, witchcraft infanticide, wrecking, theft, and other vices have been abolished.

“ Mr. Bridges has compiled a grammar and an extensive vocabulary and dictionary, and he has also completed a translation of the Gospel of St. Luke, and the Acts of the Apostles, in the Yaghan language, five hundred copies of the former having been printed and sent out. The baptismal register at the close of 1881, showed a total of one hundred and thirty-six names.”

The concluding account given by Mr. Young will be startling to some of the Ape-theorists.

“ On the occasion of the annual meeting of the South American Missionary Society, 1881, Admiral Sir B. J. Sullivan, stated that he had informed Darwin of the kindness shown to the crews of shipwrecked vessels on the part of natives who had been more or less under the influence of the mission, and had also communicated to him the fact, reported by Mr. Bridges, of there being fowl-houses unlocked at the mission station, with plenty of eggs, and that during all the years he had been there the missionaries had not lost one fowl or one egg.” In reply, the great naturalist wrote, “ He could

not have believed that all the missionaries in the world could ever have made the Fuegians honest." The admiral also spoke of Darwin having long maintained that "nothing could be done by means of mission work, that all the pains bestowed on the natives would be thrown away, and that they could never be civilized," and of his admitting afterwards that he was wrong in this opinion, and writing to him in these terms—"I had always thought that the civilisation of the Japanese is the most wonderful thing in history, but I am now convinced that what the missionaries have done in Terra del Fuego in civilising the natives is at least as wonderful." So impressed indeed was Darwin with the greatness of the change thus wrought by the mission, that *he became a regular subscriber to the society's funds!*

After all, the frank avowal of his error by Charles Darwin ought not to surprise us, for he was a *real* philosopher. He always talked of his philosophy as "my theory." I have pointed that out a thousand times to my audiences. He never said, "I have discovered an absolute and irrefragable truth, and I'll knock the man down that denies it."

Let us now turn to noble Max Müller, who for "denying the gospel of the day, that man is the offspring of a brute" is, as he says, under the anathema of the dictatorial Evolution party. Being, at least, one of the greatest linguists in the world, he is entitled to speak with decision on the great

question of Man's origin—for, as Man only can speak, language must be one of the surest tests of his origin. Thus the great professor of language says,—

“As I look upon language neither as a ready-made gift of God, nor as a natural growth of the human mind, but as, in the true sense of the word, a work of human art, I must confess that nothing has surprised me so much as the high art displayed in the languages of so-called savages. I do not wish to exaggerate; and I know quite well that a great abundance of grammatical forms, such as we find in these savages dialects, is by no means a proof of high intellectual development. But if we consider how small is the number of words and ideas in the ordinary vocabulary of an English peasant, and if then we find that one dialect of the Fuegians, the Tagan, consists of about 30,000 words, we certainly hesitate before venturing to classify the possessors of so vast an inherited wealth as the descendants of poor savages, more savage than themselves. Such facts cannot be argued away. We cannot prevent people from despising religious concepts different from their own, or from laughing at customs which they themselves could never adopt. But such a treasure of conceptual thought as is implied in the possession of a vocabulary of 30,000 entries, cannot be ignored in our estimate of the antecedents of this Fuegian race. I select the

Fuegians as a crucial test, simply because Darwin selected them as the strongest proof of his own theory, and placed them almost below the level reached by the most intelligent animals. I have always had a true regard for Darwin, and what I admired in him more than anything else was his fearlessness, his simple devotion to truth. I believe that if he had seen that his own theories were wrong, he would have been the first to declare it, whatever his followers might have said. But in spite of all that, no man can resist the influence of his own convictions. When Darwin looked at the Fuegians, he no doubt saw what he tells us ; but then he saw it with Darwinian eyes."

Professor Max Müller contends that Mr. Darwin was mistaken in his estimate of the Fuegian language. He shows that some tasteful judges of language have expressed their opinion in the contrary direction ; and then, he thus proceeds:—

"And, even if the sound of their language was as guttural as some of the Swiss dialects, how shall we account for the wealth of their vocabulary ? Every concept embodied in their language is the result of hard intellectual labour ; and although here again excessive wealth may be an embarrassment, yet there remains enough to prove a past that must have been very different from the present.

"The workman must at least have been as great as his work ; and as the ruins of Central America tell

us of architects greater than any that country could produce at present, the magnificent ruins in the dialect, whether Fuegians, Mohawks, or Hottentots, tell us of mental builders whom no one could match at present. Even in their religious beliefs there are here and there rays of truth which could never have proceeded from the dark night of their actual superstitions. The Fuegians, according to Captain Fitz-Roy, believe in a just god, and a spirit moving about in forests and mountains. They may believe in a great deal more, but people who believe in a great spirit in forests and mountains, and in a just god, are not on the lowest step of the ladder leading from earth to heaven.

“The Duke of Argyll, in examining the principal races that are commonly called savage, has pointed out that degraded races generally inhabit the extreme ends of continents or tracts of country almost unfit for human habitation, or again whole islands difficult of access except under exceptionally favourable conditions. He naturally concludes that they did not go there of their own free will, but that they represent conquered races, exiles, weaklings, cowards, criminals, who saved nothing but their life in their flight before more vigorous conquerors, or in their exile from countries that had thrown them off like poison. Instead of looking on the inhabitants of Terra del Fuego as children of the soil, Autochthones, or the immediate descendants of the mythical

Proanthropoi, the Duke points out that it is far more likely they may have come from the north; that their ancestors may have participated in the blessings of the soil and climate of Chili, Peru, Brazil, or Mexico, possibly in the early civilisation of that part of the world; and that the wretchedness of the country into which they were driven fully accounts for their present degradation. Take away the wretchedness of their present home, educate a baby, as Captain FitzRoy did, under the beneficent influence of an English sky and of European civilisation, and in one generation, as Mr. Darwin tells us, 'his intellect and disposition were good.'"

The concluding words of Max Müller, in the article which I have taken the liberty to quote, in the first number for the present year, of the *Nineteenth Century*, are very wise words. They are as follows :—

"Disappointing as it may sound, the fact must be faced, nevertheless, that our reasoning faculties, wonderful as they are, break down completely before all problems concerning the origin of things. We may imagine, we may believe, anything we like about the first man; we can know absolutely nothing. If we trace him back to a primeval cell, the primeval cell that could become a man is more mysterious by far than the man that was evolved from a cell. If we trace him back to a primeval pro-anthropos, the pro-anthropos is more unintelli-

gible to us than even the protanthropos would be. If we trace back the whole solar system to a rotating nebula, that wonderful nebula, which by evolution and revolution could become an inhabitable universe is, again, far more mysterious than the universe itself.

“The lesson that there are limits to our knowledge is an old lesson, but it has to be taught again and again. It was taught by Buddha, it was taught by Socrates, and it was taught for the last time in the most powerful manner by Kant. Philosophy has been called the knowledge of our knowledge ; it might be called more truly the knowledge of our ignorance, or, to adopt the more moderate language of Kant, the knowledge of the limits of our knowledge.”

Let us hope we are not far from the time when the little people who so fussily show us their collections of chipped flints, and desire so earnestly, that we will mark how artistically they are chipped, proving, they contend, that the flints must have been chipped by human beings—will see that their reasoning cuts the other way: *not* that Man came out of the Apes, but that he lost his civilisation, and had to resort to such substitutes as he could invent, when he had wandered away from the land where he had lived in a higher condition. And the fragments of bone, with drawings upon them—so artistic ! the exhibitors charge you to observe—do

they show also that Man was just rising out of the brute when he was able to draw that figure of a deer, *so artistically*?

I freely confess that no flint, or bone, or ancient fragment of any kind, has ever been shown to me, by the most enthusiastic Ape-theorist—and I know here and there one—which proved or seemed likely to prove anything more than that he who worked and formed the same was merely imitating the convenient tool, or the more perfect drawing, he had possessed before he wandered away from a higher condition in which he and his ancestors lived.

XVII.

ON THE 'MESSIAH' OF HANDEL.

DID the musicians among our English working men and lower middle classes who assisted in the occasional performance of the *Messiah* fifty years ago, know what they were doing? Let none of the intellectuals of the present day be surprised if I be so audacious as to answer—*No*. For that is the true answer. It will be remembered by all who have read my 'Life written by Myself' what an enthusiastic connection I had with the Lincoln Choral Society, fifty years ago.

Now, the first time that a performance of the entire *Messiah* was announced in our advertisements, we had, as is usual with such societies, a book of the words sold to those who attended to hear. I had strongly suspected that there was a profound degree of ignorance among people in general, respecting the true character of the *Messiah*, since I found it to be so common among musicians. So I drew up a plain description of what the *Messiah* really is, and had it printed and prefixed to the book of words, that every listener to the music might

know what it really was to which he was listening.

I do not think that a tenth part of the crowd of listeners read the description—for I never heard any one of them mention it. But, judge of my astonishment, on my first visit to our organist after the performance—and, on my visit, the following day, to a clerical gentleman who had the reputation of being the best pianist and the most accomplished musician in Lincoln—both of whom, I found, were as ignorant as the crowd of the real nature of Handel's priceless work!

"Pray, where did you find this excellent description of the *Messiah*?" I was asked.

"Oh, sir," said I, to the one and the other, "I drew it up hastily myself—for I find people in general go to hear music without thinking much of the nature of what is being performed."

In each case, the skilled musician gazed at me, incredulously, and said, "How can *you* have written it? I have gone through Handel's work hundreds of times in my life, and I never understood the meaning of it before—but, for a certainty, this is the meaning of it!"

The greater frequency of musical performances in England, and, I suppose one may add, the improved musical taste of the people, have led, no doubt, to a better estimate, arising from greater thoughtfulness, of the true nature and value of great master-pieces

in music. I have no copy of the description I drew up to prefix to our book of words: so I must take the liberty to give the reader a substitute which embodies that description.

In my novel entitled 'The Family Feud'—now out of print—I have three heroines: a plain country girl, a fine attractive lady, and a romantic musical enthusiast. Now, when you are writing for bread—an experience which many scores of men in London, will understand—you are ready to snatch at almost any scrap of writing you have in your desk, and make use of it, if you can. I remembered the "description" and so made use of it in a dialogue between the musical enthusiast and the hero of the story. I extract some part of the dialogue. It is as follows:—

"Handel failed—if it be not profane to say that such a giant could fail," said Una, "in attempting to portray in music the vivid and rapturous thoughts of 'Il Penseroso' and 'L'Allegro.' But, if he could not translate Milton's own ineffable language into a higher, he transcends Milton in his management of a great subject on which they have, each, essayed his colossal genius independently."

"I do not exactly know to what you allude," said Wilfred.

"To the 'Messiah,' his great musical epic. It is the true 'Paradise Regained': the proper sequel to the 'Paradise Lost.'"

"There is glorious poetry in the 'Paradise Regained'—glorious poetry——"

"Such as none but our all-glorious Milton could write," interjected Una.

"Yet, I have always thought," continued Harlow, "that the attempts to overthrow noble old Johnson's objection to it were unsuccessful. It is founded on too narrow a basis: the theme required a wider platform for full treatment than that afforded by the narrative of the temptation in the wilderness. The stupendous event of Man's redemption demanded a more lofty and plenary effort from Milton. But, does the 'Messiah' fulfil the requisitions we might put forth for the treatment of such a theme?"

"All—all!" replied Una, with triumphant enthusiasm.

"I had understood it to be a grand, but hasty creation thrown together in a hurry, and partly composed of adaptations from some of the great master's early efforts: the anthems composed for Christmas, and other festivals, in his youth. I remember reading, somewhere or other, something to that effect: I think it was said to be so stated in a published correspondence between Zelter and Goëthe."

After a few preliminary remarks, defining the subject of the 'Messiah,' Una showed that the Oratorio might be considered as composed of eight sections. "The first," said she, "concluding with

the magnificent chorus, 'For unto us a Child is born,' has for its whole subject the prophecies of the Old Testament directly prefiguring the advent of Messiah. The second section narrates the birth of the Divine Child. It commences with the Pastoral Symphony, and concludes with the chorus of the angels, 'Glory to God in the highest!'"

"You have said that music has a positive language," interrupted Wilfred, "and I think I felt that it had, while you played the 'Pastoral Symphony' on the organ last night. Does it not describe the sweet calm, the rest, and peacefulness of night?"

"Yes: Night, so beautiful in the East—with the flocks at rest, and the simple and happy shepherd watching them. That sweetest of symphonies shows that music has a higher vocation than that of being the mere handmaid to poetry. Handel has proved to us there the independent power of music, and how rich it is in expression of its own. He would not degrade his art by fitting the words 'There were shepherds,' etc., to an air. He threw them carelessly into recitative, as not sufficiently poetical and richly descriptive, though they are full of suggestion; and created, in the independent language of his own Art, that lovely scene of the happy night when the beneficence of Heaven was about to be realised for men."

"The third section," continued Una, "describes the Saviour's ministerial life, commences with the air

'Rejoice greatly,' and concludes with the light, pleasing chorus 'His yoke is easy.' The fourth section depicting with unequalled pathetic power the sufferings and death of Christ, commences with the chorus 'Behold the Lamb of God,' and concludes with the recitative 'He was cut off out of the land of the living.' The fifth has for its subject the resurrection and ascension of the Saviour: it bursts suddenly, in tones of returning joyousness on the ear, with the air 'But Thou didst not leave,' and ends with the air 'Thou art gone up on high.'

"The sixth section, describing the spread and universal triumph of Messiah's gospel, in spite of earthly opposition, begins with the sprightly chorus 'The Lord gave the word,' and ends with the splendid 'Hallelujah Chorus.' The seventh portraying the Christian's steadfast confidence in a resurrection, commences with the beautiful air 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' and concludes with the air 'If God be for us.' The last section completes the grand epic by describing the eternal employment of the blessed in heaven: it contains two choruses—'Worthy is the Lamb' and the 'Amen Chorus.' And the great master, as a consummating proof of his devotion, has almost exhausted his science in the construction of the last piece."

"Solve me one mystery before you finish your description," said Wilfred Harlow: "you speak of the 'Amen Chorus' as a matchless piece of musical

science ; but to me it is a puzzle. I heard it once, when, unlike the 'Pastoral Symphony,' it did speak a positive language to me. I could not comprehend the meaning of the variations on the one word 'Amen.' "

"You would have comprehended the meaning of the fugue, if you had listened to a performance of the whole *Messiah* thoughtfully. Handel is not saying 'Amen' in a whimsical way at the end of his lesson, like a quaint clerk responding to the parson at the end of the prayers. He is expressing eternity—the eternity of praise."

"I see it—I see it!" cried Wilfred.

"Take the first opportunity you may have for hearing a full performance of the *Messiah*," said Una, earnestly, "and you will be wholly of my persuasion that Handel's work is the true 'Paradise Regained': the only worthy sequel to the transcendent 'Paradise Lost.' "

No doubt, as I have before said, there is a more widely diffused and intelligent understanding of the worth and real meaning of Handel's great work than there was, in England, fifty years ago ; but I have frequently seen, in some of the small periodicals, during the last fifty years, a rash guess which shows great ignorance of what the writers were naming. "The entire Oratorio was composed in a very few days"—one has asserted. "It was struck off at a heat"—asserted another, "and there-

fore ought to be regarded as one of the greatest triumphs of the human mind." One wonders how any sensible man could either conceive or receive such an idea. Does anybody ever try to befool us by telling us that "Hamlet" was "struck off at a heat"—or "Lear," or "Othello," or "Macbeth"?

That man must be a man of no thought who can imagine that any great product of the human mind is ever "struck off at a heat." The seeds of great thoughts are conceived in the mind by influences and causes we cannot always trace; and they often are long in budding, and still longer before they blossom. Undoubtedly there is truth in what one of the writers relates in the correspondence between Zelter and Goëthe: that Handel, while only a young musician, composed anthems for the festivals of the Protestant church, and remembered many of the beautiful passages in the airs and choruses with which his wondrous genius began to teach men how to celebrate Christmas and Easter. And when the first thought of a musical epic which should embody the great subject of our redemption by Christ germed in his mind, he could not fail to remember many of the grandest and most beautiful musical achievements of his youth, and to see their fitness to form a part of his new project.

Perhaps he revolved that project for years in his mind, during the busy life into which he plunged in his manhood. There was a great deal more re-

ligiousness in Handel than some people are willing to allow. A few whimsical or grotesque anecdotes are not real tests of a man's character. That "First Part," as it is usually termed, of the *Messiah*, from "Comfort ye my people" to the close of "For unto us a Child is born," is very beautifully and strongly indicative of the fact that Handel's mind frequently and deeply pondered the ancient Scriptures—doubtless with the gradually developing thought, and then, the resolution, that he would one day do something great with their inspiring aid.

Thus one may imagine that he did not read on to the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, before he found what he judged to be a right commencement of his great musical epic—without much reverent pondering over the earlier books of the Old Testament. The giving of the Law from Sinai, however attractive the awful theme might be for musical treatment, he perceived would not form a suitable beginning for his Oratorio. The Plagues of Egypt and the Passage of the Red Sea, most likely caused him to hesitate as to whether he should enfold a lofty treatment of them into something like an introduction. But he passed over them, one cannot help thinking, at an early period, determining to try his genius upon them at a later date.

There was so much that was suitable for musical interpretation also in the histories of Abraham and the other patriarchs, that he would, belike, have to

constrain himself to pass by them—for, the more he thought of the mode by which he should introduce his great theme, the more powerfully the sweet strains of Isaiah would lay hold of his heart and imagination, till he saw clearly that the prophecies foregoing the birth of the Divine Child were what he must first deal with. It was to be a revelation of Divine love and beneficence to Man, that he was to deal with, and so it seemed clearly right that the very starting note itself and all the introductory part should be joyous: the two airs in this part which are not so, are skilful contrasts to enhance the joy of the general introduction.

No musical critic that I remember has ever taken note of one fact in the *Messiah* which is really a most noteworthy fact. That the glorious “Hallelujah Chorus” is the grandest effort and triumph of Handel’s genius is a universal opinion; and one never thinks of King George the Third, small-minded and obstinate in wrong, as he was, without a lenient feeling, when we call to mind that he instituted the custom of rising and uncovering the head whenever the sublime chorus is performed before a London audience: a custom now practised also in the country.

But what is the really noteworthy fact that I wish to impress on the mind of the reader? *Not* that the great composer gave the world his grandest chorus as a triumphant close to the period of prophecy—

although "For unto us a Child is born" is one of his noblest choruses. *Not* that he conceived it right and good to give the world his master-chorus as a conclusion to his work—although "Worthy is the Lamb" and the "Amen Chorus" form a transcendent attempt to realise the rapturous worship of the saints in heaven. It may cause a sneer with some irreverent minds, but I must contend that there was a large measure of the missionary spirit in the mind of Handel, or he would not have created his grandest chorus to celebrate the spread of Christ's gospel all over the earth—in fact, to celebrate the Millennium.

There must have been much religiousness in the heart and mind of Handel, as I have before hinted. He was a literal believer in Christianity: not a quibbler, in any degree. That simple story of what he said in his last illness proves it: "I should like," said he, "to die on Good Friday, that I might be in heaven with my dear Lord, on Easter Sunday." He died on Good Friday, as the reader will no doubt remember. The wish which some very wise people will deem childish, very likely, seems to me indicative of a great and valuable truth: that the Bible and all it reveals—but more especially the theme of Redemption—dwelt much in Handel's memory, and in his heart and mind: that he grasped the statements of Christianity as facts—facts as veritable as his own existence—and rejoiced with an elevated joy in the belief that this Christianity would, one

day, fill the earth. It is this elevated joy of his own heart and soul, that he strives to express, in the unequalled "Hallelujah" !

Let us thank God that ever He created such a soul as Milton's to give us the "Paradise Lost" ; and that He called into being such a soul as Handel's to give us the true "Paradise Regained"—the *Messiah* !

XVIII.

ON THE MISUSE OF LANGUAGE IN CONVERSATION.

A FOREIGNER who was condemned to hear our daily speech could not be deemed harsh, if he avowed his belief that English people considered their native tongue as too beggarly for use—if he judged that we believed the successive generations of our ancestors had left us heirs to a speech too troublesome and untasteful for us to take it daily into our mouths, and sound it in one another's ears. The poor, neglected adjectives of our language, for instance—although so highly prized and carefully treasured up in his memory by the Poet—seem to be commonly regarded as worn out and worthless. I am not pointing to the practice of the *profanum vulgus* : I am talking of the daily and hourly conversation of thousands who are held unquestionably to be *gentlefolks*. They have fixed on the one small pitiable adjective, *nice* ; and they murder it, every day of their lives.

Thus we hear of a nice man, a nice fellow, a nice boy or girl, a nice woman, and a nice lady, a nice gentleman, and his nice wife or daughter, a nice

pony, a nice chaise, a nice coat or waistcoat, a nice hat, a nice pair of shoes or boots, a nice table or chair, a nice book, a nice inkstand, a nice plate, a nice house, a nice garden, a nice flower or tree, a nice dog, a nice cat, a nice bird, a nice cage, a nice pudding, a nice tart, a nice apple or orange, a nice pear or plum, a nice glass, a nice decanter, a nice mutton chop, a nice veal cutlet, a nice veil, a nice bonnet, a nice handkerchief, a nice dress, a nice frill, a nice piece of silk, lace, or muslin, a nice player on the piano, a nice singer, a nice speaker, a nice tune, a nice song, nice music, nice wine, nice tea, nice coffee, a nice place, a nice town, a nice street or square, a nice walk, a nice sleep, a nice dinner, nice company, nice talk, a nice visit, a nice drive, a nice sofa, a nice watch, a nice gold chain, a nice church or chapel, a nice pew, and, even a nice minister ! What is there that poor, infatuated people, of so many grades, do not call *nice* ?

If it be right and sensible to go on with this vulgar practice, let editions be printed of dictionaries which have no adjectives in them except this four-lettered thing—*nice*. As the other adjectives are deemed not worth using, let them be abolished ; and let it be fineable for any person who can afford to pay a fine, to speak of a good man, an agreeable man, a courteous man, a kind man, a polite man, a pleasant man, a well-disposed man, a clever man—or a man of any description except a *nice* man.

And let there be equal dealing towards the gentler sex: they are to be fined if they substitute any other adjective for *nice*. And, if there be any working man so self-opinionated and ill-mannered, that he will not,—say or threaten what you may,—use the word *nice*, but will use adjectives which his conceit selects as more appropriate—why, give him a day's fasting on the tread-wheel, to teach him "manners." As to enlisting people in a crusade against this murdering of the word *nice*—nobody could be found to join it. I see no remedy but to let the infatuation wear itself out, but that will not be in my time.

Another word which has been for some years common among uneducated working men, is now coming into use among what are called "the respectable people." I mean the poor little word *lots*. The use of it is often really disgusting. "Lots of folks"—"lots of fun"—"lots of sheep and cattle"—lots of pigs and pigeons—"lots of crows and sparrows"—lots of time: "we've an hour to spare yet"—"lots of rubbish"—"lots of butter and eggs in the market, to-day"—"lots of books"—"lots of fiddlers and dancers"—"lots of singers"—"lots of parsons"—"lots of chapels and churches"—I need not go on: everything is vulgarized by being described consisting of *lots*!

I have tried a reforming experiment with some of these *lot*-people. "My friend," I have said, "do you

not know that a *lot* is a share? It is quite right to say "that piece of ground is to be sold in lots of three or four acres each"; but it would be wrong to say "that piece of ground grows *lots* of thistles." *Lot* does not mean abundance: it means a share, or "divided portion." My listener, instead of being reformed, has usually laughed at me, in derision, and walked away!

Other words are wrongly used, and their wrong use has a current acceptation even among highly-cultured people—who never seem to suspect that they are speaking incorrectly. I may instance the word *quantity*, so commonly substituted for "number." Addison commits the error in his first paper in the dear old *Spectator*: he talks of a "*quantity* of people"; and I have heard Thomas Carlyle make the same blunder, again and again—but I had not the courage to tell him of it. One would think that it requires small culture to perceive that while it is right to speak of a quantity of meal, or anything that can be measured—we ought to use the word *number* when we speak of what can be counted.

Living as we do, in an age of exaggeration, we need not wonder at the current use of such epithets as "splendid," "frightful," "awful," and "terrific"; but in whatever violations of rational speech sane people may choose to indulge—no one should be allowed to establish a habit of daily corrupting our grammar,

without notice being taken of such a barbarous propensity.

Exceedingly few people among the classes which are not really well-educated seem to know that they are speaking incorrectly by using the word *very* in the way they always use it. "I am very pleased to see you," they commonly say. I venture, sometimes, to ask young ministers, or others, "Why do you say you are *very* pleased? Does not 'pleased' express what you mean without *very*? Do you ever say 'I am *very* loved'—or 'I was very struck'—or 'I was very clothed'—or 'very adapted,' or 'very pledged,' or 'very watched,' or 'very pruned,' or 'very digged,' or 'very bathed,' or 'very washed,' or 'very shortened'?"

No: the nature of the perfect participle—whether you know it to be one, or not—has the mysterious effect of preventing you from joining it with a wrong word. Instead of *very*, you use "much," or "well," or "greatly": you *must* exaggerate, to be in fashion: but, by instinct—for it may be by instinct only, and not by knowledge: you, by instinct, avoid the use of bad grammar.

I am sorry to say that this bad habit is growing. I heard a young preacher say, the other day, that he was "very interested" in reading a certain book; and a good lady say she was "very distressed" on hearing that so many poor people were in want.

Let the critics know that I am aware of there

being a little difficulty in this case. We are so much in the habit of converting perfect participles into what are called "participial adjectives," that it is not a violation of language to place the word "very" before a word which is so converted. The first word in our common version of the Psalms furnishes us with a good instance, or example : "Blessed is the man," and so forth : we may correctly say of such a man, "Yes : he is a *very* blessed man."

I will not say more about our common misuse of language in conversation. Some will, perchance, think I had better have said nothing about it. But, surely, an old man may be excused for trying to abolish errors of any kind, before he goes out of this world of error.

XIX.

WHAT OUR MORAL NATURE PROVES.

[An Argument addressed to a small company of moral men, who were professed Atheists : thirty years ago.]

NOTHING ever cost me more anxious thought than the word "Duty." All of you who have heard me in this place and elsewhere, for some years past, must remember that it was a very frequent word with me : as frequent as the word "Retribution." And you may also remember how often some of our young friends attempted to get up an opposition to my views of "Duty" and "Retribution." They did not succeed in convincing me ; nor, perhaps, did I succeed in convincing them. That very opposition, however, served to make me think more deeply. I began to see the reason why they did not like my notions of "Retribution" ; and I began to see that it was also impossible they could receive my notions of "Duty."

This caused me to weigh very thoughtfully the arguments for and against the Moral Nature of Man. And I came at length to the conviction that there

is no solid foundation for Morality, no certainty of securing moral practice, without the clear perception and belief in an Infinite Moral Governor of the Universe. And I no sooner reached that conviction than I found it impossible to resist conscience, and so began to teach it.

I have certainly not pleased my old friends in taking these steps—and it is not very evident, I think, that I have made many new friends by taking this course. But I have long since learned that to obey conscience and speak truth, let the consequences be what they may, is far nobler than to seek to please men by telling them what they like, and what meets their views.

To-night, I return to this great subject of Duty ; and I must speak what I believe to be the truth, from conviction. I impugn no other man's conviction. I only entreat all to think, and to think seriously upon the grounds of Duty.

And I must commence by saying that I hold it to be utterly impossible to show any real ground for Duty, in a high and noble sense, if men deny the existence of a Moral Governor of the World and His endowment of Man with a moral nature and attribute all existence to blind or unintelligent Necessity.

I. Man's first duty, with the conviction of God's existence, would be submission to the will of God. I have no canting meaning: I mean nothing slavish: I have a right to protest and resist oppression, for it

is contrary to God's will. The organic laws are violated by those who oppress us ; and submission to the will of God does not consist in submitting to those who are not guided by *His* Will.

Submission to the will of God ought at least to be general. There ought to be no daring accusation of His wisdom and reckless denial of His goodness. "We don't want a God : we can do without Him," some of you say. I do not say you all talk in that manner. I hope some of you do want to believe in a God, and would gladly believe if your difficulties were removed. But from the signs of approval given to some reckless speakers, in these discussions, it would seem that some of you really like to hear an oppositionist all the better the more coarsely and recklessly he talks.

Submission that God has done right in making Man what he is—that is, human and not angelic ; submission, to His Infinite Wisdom and perfect goodness in making Man ; and confidence and trust that God had the most beneficent intent in *thus* making Man : these form "submission to His Will, in general." But the Love of God is no duty with you who deny His existence. You ignore such a feeling. You will not allow yourselves to admire His wisdom, and you deny His goodness—therefore how can you love Him ? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," etc., words which express what we must feel to be the highest of all

duties, when we believe in God : these words are unmeaning to you—or you sneer at them.

Love God ! you do not admit that there is one to love. You contend that if there be one, He must rather deserve a grumbling hatred than a devout love, because He has not made the Universe right. And yet how cheerfully you can acquiesce in the present condition of things, if you may be without God, and have for worship your favourite Necessity—blind, unintelligent Necessity. *Then*, it is all right—or it will be right in time—for you believe in endless progression. *You* are the only gods : there are no other. Thus your Atheism is really a Polytheism.

But you will not like so much to be said about the *passive* duty : submission to the will of God. And, perhaps, you will bear as impatiently anything that can be said about the *active* duty which is binding on Man—namely,

2. Doing the will of God : I mean not merely submission, but doing it in act, and word, and thought. I find a new language used of late, by some of the professed disciples of Atheism. The word “Duty” is very much used and insisted on by them. And I am glad of this ; because I am sure, if you will only use reflection, that it will soon lead you and me to a happy agreement. Active duties are commended, and you are encouraged to perform them, from the inward satisfaction they will give you.

Pray how is it that you expect to take delight in benevolence and self-denial and self-sacrifice? What makes you capable of such a feeling? Your nature is not altogether of such despicable origin, then, as some of you profess to think.

Where did you get the nature to pity distress and to deny yourselves in order to relieve it, or to feel that you ought to do so? Is it not a proof that God has made you much better than you profess to believe, while you are finding fault with the nature He has given to Man? How came you to be capable of yearning over the distressed and labouring to relieve them, if all things spring from a blind Necessity—a Necessity without mind and without will? Is it not very unaccountable that from unthinking atoms this creature Man should come to exist—filled with pity and love for his kind, and capable of progressing in such feelings, by reflecting upon their excellence and resolving to be more excellent?

I tell you when lost amidst all the difficulties which surround these great questions—baffled by vain attempts to get right in one direction and another—and often feeling as if I must give up the struggle and resign myself to a hopeless scepticism—this was where light broke in upon me. The exalted moral nature of Man—his aspirations after purity and rectitude, notwithstanding his lapses into error and crime—and the longing after that purity and

rectitude which only becomes more deep and fervent the more the aspiration is cherished.

Now, I speak home to your own experience, believing you to be sincere men. I trust all of you—although I cannot read your hearts, and I have no right to judge you evilly,—I speak home to you, and I ask you if you do not know what it is to struggle against bad passions and bad desires, and to breathe after a higher nature ; to desire to be freed from anger and pride and vindictiveness and unkind thoughts and selfishness and unclean thoughts and all the daily imperfection of which you are conscious ? Whence comes all this ? If you owe your existence to a blind Necessity, if no Great Power made you, if no Divine Power stirs in you, if this world has no Great Moral Governor, and you are only to live a few days here, and then die and be conscious no more for ever—why have you these aspirations ? Because God stirs within you : for He is in you, although you deny Him.

All this aspiration is inconsistent with your principles, as Atheists. A blind Necessity : the world was not made by the Divine Intelligence. " Intelligence is no primary principle," says our sincere little friend there—for no doubt he is sincere. There has come to be, somehow or other, what is called " intelligence "—but it was not from Intelligence : it was by unintelligent Necessity. And why all this mental toil to acquire good dispositions and

good tempers and good thoughts, that we may be enabled to take delight in doing good, and higher and still higher delight? It is no preparation for another and a better state: it is only a bustle in the dust to which we shall soon return and be no more conscious for ever! These are the principles of Atheistic Materialism; and I contend that no "elevated morality" can spring from such principles.

There is no Divine Moral Governor, you contend; and so you are amenable to none; and why, therefore, should you cherish the wish for purity of heart and life? There is no righteous Judge to whom you are accountable for your words, either; and therefore why should you be particular about the words you use—whether they be true or false, vile or noble, clean or unclean? And your thoughts? There is no All-Searching Power Who is privy to every thought and Whose eye seeth in secret—according to your belief; and therefore why, since man cannot see your thoughts, should you be delicate and nice about your thinkings—or be troubled and pained when evil thoughts come into your mind? Aspire to think nobly and purely, and be pained when your thoughts are low and grovelling!—why should you? Your principles proclaim that you are made to grovel, and your grovelling is simply to close with the grave. But you cannot help being pained and disgusted with yourselves when low and grovelling thoughts pester your

minds : no, because your principles do not tell the truth about your nature. Try to show that it is not so, if you can.

If I may be allowed to tell you plainly,—and if you will take no offence by my speaking plainly,—I think I can point you to some examples of consistent Atheism : for you who are aiming to subdue evil thoughts and passions and to live more purely and morally, every day, are *not* consistent Atheists—you are living as if you were really under the Moral Government that you deny. I can easily point you to men who, whatever their professions might be, were consistent and practical Atheists : Cæsar, Napoleon the Great, and Napoleon the Little. Our own George the Fourth, was a practical Atheist, in another line. Men who amass riches by oppression of the poor, are in the same category ; for they act as if God did not heed them, and would not call them to account.

You will, doubtless, argue that this is a libel upon you ; and you will say there are two valid and impelling reasons why you should practise the duties of benevolence to your fellow-men, and act truthfully and uprightly. First, there is the immediate reward in your own bosoms ; and secondly, you are doing something to mend the world, and to make it happier for posterity.

1. But your first reason for the practice of moral duties only brings us back to the question I have

already put to you. Why does the practice of goodness bring an immediate reward to the bosom of him who practises goodness? How is it that our natures are so constituted? You still have to show me how this springs from a blind Necessity: for if there be only an unintelligent necessity in all things, man really deserves neither praise nor blame—he can neither keep nor transgress a moral law, for there is no Moral Lawgiver.

And as there are only physical or organic laws, men practise kindness organically, by necessity, like machines; or they practise unkindness, like machines, and by necessity. And neither deserves praise or blame: a rascal is one by necessity, and you have no right to charge him with moral guilt: there is no moral guilt according to consistent Atheism and Materialism. You must free Napoleon the Little from execration: he is only acting according to the mechanical necessity of his nature.

You talk of the reward virtue brings to a man's own bosom. But the culture of virtue is a labour as well as a reward.

Remember how often we have spoken here of the difficulty of acquiring habits for good, and of the ease with which we glide into habits of evil. You acquiesced in these lessons at the time I taught them. You approved of the teaching. You knew then, and you know now, that there is the utmost need for the repetition of lessons of virtue, and that

the oftener they are taught the better. So many and so strong are the seductions of life, in whatever situation we are placed, that we are perpetually liable to go wrong. It does not seem, then, that the reward which we know we shall have in our own bosoms is so very compelling and omnipotent in its operation upon us, as to constrain us always to do virtuously.

And what elevated virtue or morality can there be without self-denial? Self-denial—which does not mean the giving something to another which we can do as well without—but parting with something which we really want, in order to relieve another whose wants are, perhaps, greater. Why should an Atheist practice such superfluous charity? There is no praise, there is no blame: there is no merit, there is no demerit: there is no right, there is no wrong: a man may do as he likes, and live as he likes—and especially he may do as he likes with his own: there is no Power to which he is amenable for hardening his heart against a fellow-creature. Why should the Atheist be soft-hearted and pitiful and self-denying? Why should he not enjoy the little he can enjoy of the world while he is in it? He will not have to stay in it long; and there is no other world for him, when he has done here.

But why is it that some of you who profess to be Atheists, do often deny yourselves to relieve others? Not so often as you ought. You feel, as I feel, that

Paul spoke truth when he said, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." It is too often so with us. We have none of us any cause to boast of our excellence. The longer we live and the more deeply we learn to watch our own hearts, the more imperfect we see we are. But why is it that we can deny ourselves at all to relieve others? Because God has given us moral natures, hearts prone to pity, and open to kindness. We may sin against God that is in our nature: we may yield to selfish thoughts till our hearts grow hard and callous to distress and suffering; but we are then trampling down and stifling the moral nature that God has given us and which we could not have inherited from any blind Necessity.

2. But I observed that you would, doubtless, advance a second argument why you should practise virtue—that you may mend the world and make it happier for posterity. Posterity, and the Future!—why, what are they to the Atheist and Materialist? Utter blanks. You believe in no future state: you are to perish in the grave: you expect no future and higher existence wherein the advancement of the world with successive ages will be known to you, and add to your happiness.

The future amelioration of this world is nothing to you, for you are not to live in it, or to be conscious of what is passing in it when you are removed to a higher condition of existence. And why should

you try to mend the world, if all things work by a blind Necessity?—if there be no Intelligent Providence superintending the world and designing to bring harmony out of discord?—ultimate happiness out of conflict?

We spoke of self-sacrifice, as well as self-denial. And there have been great and glorious human beings who have laid down their lives in order to mend the world, and with the full belief that by so laying down their lives they would make it happier for posterity. But did you ever read of any man in all history, ancient or modern, who was accused of Atheism, tried for Atheism, and was offered pardon if he would give up his Atheism—but who refused to give it up, and who went to death proclaiming that he knew his death would bless the world? Not one. Not a single man. Men have been tried for Atheism and denied it—so was Socrates. Men have been burnt for Atheism—so was Vanini—but he vehemently denied it.

But men have died for their consistent belief in God and refusal to believe superstition, and have triumphed professing that their death would benefit the world. Latimer was one.

Self-Sacrifice!—sacrifice his life—the only life he has, or believes he ever shall have—to benefit posterity—why should the Atheist do that? What folly! No man *can* be such a fool. It is not in human nature. We are not such born fools.

True happiness is only to be obtained by devotedness to the will of God. Seeking the universal good—the highest good of all. Christ's teaching embodies the will of God. Life can only be truly happy, not when we are in ecstasy, but when we are doing right. Life can only be truly happy when we are seeking to be purer and holier and better—every day and every hour. Can it be thought, if God exists and is in us and with us, that He will not assist all who breathe after Him, to become purer and holier and better? Oh, let us try it!

XX.

A SHORT SEQUEL, AND CONCLUSION.

A DOZEN years have passed since I wrote the last word in my Autobiography : so my friends urge me to give them some kind of a Sequel. It will be a short one, for, although I have revisited every part of England, and some parts of it over and over again, during these twelve years, it has been to do the same kind of work as I had done before. So I have nothing new to communicate in that direction.

I regret to add, that my work has been done more feebly, as my years have increased. For the last six winters, I have been compelled to give up, almost entirely, my travelling and talking work, by the return of what is called Chronic Bronchitis. I am very thankful when it leaves me—usually about May—and I am able to get out again, and travel and talk ; and I am sad when I have to return home, in the latter autumn, knowing it is to encounter a solitary winter by the fireside, with less and less ability to read or write. For, my left eye is no longer a working eye, and often prevents the right

eye from working effectually : so that I have to shut my eyes, and sit and think, or occupy my mind as well as I can devise.

In spite of these, and other disabilities, I have succeeded in book-making during these last twelve years, by the help of my kind publishers. To a man of fourscore, as I have said, it is natural to look back on the past. And I am thinking, just now how, in my youth, amid my repetitions of the 'Paradise Lost' and 'Hamlet' and the Latin Accidence, as I sat bending over the last, and wielding the awl, there were mingled ambitious day-dreams of the life of authorship that was to come : how I should reach London, with a finished poem in a few years, and commence a literary career resembling the literary lives of Johnson, Goldsmith, and others, and should rise to fame !

But the bright vision—which so many have experienced—was never to be realized. The school-master life came instead—and the local-preacher life—and the newspaper writer's life—and the championship for the starving and oppressed—and the demagogue life—and the prison life : all these had to be accomplished before a book was produced that had in it something which, I trusted, my countrymen "would not willingly let die." I thought, when the *Britannia* and some other periodicals, gave my 'Prison-Rhyme' such a triumphant reception, the life of authorship, which had so often been my day-dream,

was now fairly begun. But no! It was soon remembered that I was a Chartist, and I was driven on the fatal sand-bank of trying to set up a weekly periodical, which broke down and plunged me into new debts; and I had to take to lecturing on politics, history, etc., for a living.

This lasted till I abandoned the errors into which I had fallen through reading Miss Evans's translation of Strauss's 'Leben Jesu,' and lecturing upon it. The readers of my Autobiography know all about that struggle, and how it ended in my happy return to Christianity, and a determination to spend the remnant of my life in expounding and teaching the Christian Evidences. And, so fully I became absorbed in my *right* work—for such I soon perceived it to be—that all thoughts of authorship were abandoned, and I thought they would never return, but that I should live, henceforth, a life of travel, visiting every region in Great Britain where I thought I could successfully sow the seeds of Christian Truth.

The incessant urgency of friends, on all sides, almost compelled me, at last, to publish my 'Bridge of History over the Gulf of Time.' The little book is now in its twenty-fifth thousand; and, thank God, has done unquestionable good, by its simple and plain, and yet full relation of the *veritable* historical evidence for the truth of Christianity. During succeeding years, I have added four other small volumes on the Christian Evidences. 'God, the

Soul, and a Future State' embodies my lectures on the Design Argument and the Argument *à priori* for God's existence; and the argument for a Future State. Two little volumes entitled 'The Verity and Value of the Miracles' and 'The Verity of Christ's Resurrection from the Dead' contain what I have advanced on these Christian truths in my itinerant course. The fifth volume of what I may call my 'Christian Evidence Series' is entitled 'Evolution, the Stone Book, and the Mosaic Record of Creation.' It contains what I said to my audiences in the beginning, rather than in the end, of my talk about Darwinism. A short lecture on Geology is included in the volume because I found it necessary to teach many of my hearers something about that science before they could understand what I had to say about Evolution. The reader must refer to the little book itself to learn what is my theory as it respects the Mosaic Record.

I may add, that following up the volume called 'Plain Pulpit Talk,' I have published a volume of the same size, entitled 'The Atonement, and other Discourses.' The two volumes contain plain sermons delivered on the Lord's Day, in the chapels of evangelical denominations, in almost every part of the country. As the Stories published by Mr. How, in 1845, were out of print, I have republished them, with a few additions, under the title of 'Old Fashioned Stories.' Lastly, my publishers issued

for me, eight years ago, a portly volume entitled 'Poetical Works.' It contains my 'Purgatory of Suicides,' 'Paradise of Martyrs,' and 'Minor Poems.' I should observe that I only completed a part of my purposed 'Paradise of Martyrs,' and the 'Minor Poems' are only a selection from other rhymes that I have written—for I thought the world had had quite enough of 'Minor Poems,' and I would not add to the overplus. And so concludes the catalogue of my literary labour—such as it has been : something very different from what I dreamt it would be, in my youth ; but yet, I hope, containing something which may do good to some of my fellow-men.

The most afflictive event I have to record as having fallen to my experience during these twelve years, is the death of my beloved wife. She died on the first of February, 1870, at the age of nearly seventy-nine. She had been my gentle, loving, and intelligent life-companion for forty-six years. The sight and hearing of the intense suffering she endured during the latter part of her life—together with her own earnest desire to depart and be with Christ—reconciled me to the fact of her death. She came to the habitation where I now reside, to lodge with her sister when she could no longer travel with me. Her sister died, and she died seven months after, leaving me tenant here—where I purpose remaining each winter so long as I live.

I look from my room window upon the spot (now part of the Great Northern Railway yard) where stood the little cottage we lived in when we were married, and I also look out on the little church of St. Mary-le-Wigford, where we were joined in holy wedlock. My beloved one is buried in the southern cemetery of the old city, and I have bought myself ground for a grave near to her.

The decease of many of my deeply-beloved friends and benefactors, is often the subject of sorrowful reflection with me. The death of my dearest friend, the Rev. Dr. Jobson, Wesleyan minister, to whom I inscribed my Autobiography, is my greatest loss. We had been friends for fifty years ; and for many years, until his mind and body began to fail, we corresponded nearly every week of our lives. He was my junior by nearly seven years, so I had no anticipation that I should lose the precious benefit of his friendship, by his dying before me. The great age of my good and kind friend, Thomas Carlyle, rendered his death no surprise to me, though it was a source of mournful feeling ; but this feeling is mingled with thankfulness that ever I enjoyed a friendship so illustrious. The decease of dear Charles Kingsley—too early for the world that he helped to make better—was a real grief to me ; and so was the death of my kind friend and benefactor, Tom Taylor. James Harvey of London bore no literary rank, but I had not a human friend in existence

whose kindly help was ever more ready, more hearty, more unwearied.

I must not forget to record that I have lost my old playmate, Thomas Miller. Such are the vicissitudes of a literary life, in too many instances, that although he had written nearly fifty books of light literature, he fell into the deepest poverty in his last days. Mr. Disraeli compassionately sent him £100 from the Treasury, while he was on his death-bed ; but it came nearly too late. Two orphans survive him ; and they are the heirs of his poverty.

This volume must not come to a close without some registry of my convictions as to the work in which I have employed myself during the last thirty years of my life. Surely, the Author of all good does not suffer any effort wholly to fail, however feeble it may be, if it be made with the sincere intent to draw men away from sin and error, and to lead them to Christ and His truth. And I must inform the reader that as my labour has been solitary, it has not been mighty. Letters expressing gratitude, and testimonials given to me verbally, that I have been made instrumental, through the mercy and condescension of God, in doing good, have cheered me, often. But I have sometimes felt sad that no determined band of young men fitted for maintaining and defending the Evidences of their Saviour's religion has yet arisen.

I do not lose the hope and confidence that such a band will, one day, arise, and pledge themselves to God and one another to pursue their work till death—despising poverty and difficulty and opposition and indifference on the part of those who ought to be their foremost helpers.

No doubt the marvellous rapidity with which Darwinism and Evolution have spread in all directions and among all classes, and the haughty assertion on the parts of Evolutionists that they “are the people, and wisdom shall die with them,” have an intimidating effect on the minds of such as do desire to belong to an army of defence for religion. Many who are called “Scientists,” when you come to learn something about their acquirements, prove to be only small men—and yet they hold their heads very high. There is not the cause to dread them that some good Christians imagine to exist ; and I wish I could get young men who wish to devote themselves to Christ’s work to think so.

There is, however, a strong apprehension among some highly-intelligent men, that it would be no easy work to encounter sceptical working men successfully—for the works of Darwin and Spencer have come into their hands, and they have so thoroughly digested the arguments found in these books as to have become thoroughly fortified against all possible ways of trying to bring them out of their errors.

Last month (February) I received a letter from a

highly-intelligent resident in a large manufacturing town in Lancashire, and will extract some part of it, to elucidate what I am saying.

"The Secularists are very active here, just now, and, although I believe that the leaders in the movement are neither intellectually nor morally fit to be leaders in any *progressive* or constructive movement, yet their assertions are, without doubt, helping men's worse selves in the destruction of what little faith they have.

"I am of opinion that thousands of men of all classes really believe the assertions of such blind leaders—which assertions, broadly stated, are

"1. That Science has clearly overthrown Revelation; and, that the leading thinkers and scholars of the age have given up Christianity as untenable.

"2. That Religion, or any kind of belief in the Supernatural, is *Superstition*.

"3. That, on the whole, Christianity has done more harm than good in the world.

"I say nothing either of the fact that these men consistently put forward rather the fancies of sections of those professing Christianity, than the plain statements of the Bible, as being Christianity,—or of the fallacy underlying their notion of *liberty* either of thought or action, because I believe that at the root, the cause of their hatred of Christianity is not intellectual, but *moral*: certainly, I believe it to be so in the masses."

Now, the letter from which I have taken this extract, comes from a town in which I have lectured more than twenty times within the last fourteen years. I never heard that the town was more thickly crowded with sceptics than other great towns of the County Palatine ; and I cannot help thinking that Secularism is, chiefly, of late growth in it.

Besides, it should be noted that Secularism is spasmodic in its activity. I have sometimes visited a town where, a few years ago, it was rampant—but now, it was comparatively silent and quiescent ; and so I found it remained until something occurred to give it new life and vigour. This may serve to allay the fears of the good friend who sent me the letter from which I have taken an extract. The great champion of Secularism had just then visited the town, and £75 had been taken, in sixpenny and threepenny admissions to his lectures.

One serious thought, however, arises out of this fact : that not only the working men in great numbers listened to this champion, but there must have been a considerable number of the middle class among his hearers. Let us charitably hope that curiosity was the main motive which led many of them to listen, and that they came away disgusted, rather than charmed, with what he said.

When I urge, again, the formation of a band of young men devoted to the defence of religion, I cannot promise them glittering rewards such as this

champion of Secularism reaps. What I said, while urging the same plea, in my Autobiography, I say now : " Let all come in to hear you *free*. Sell no tickets, take no moneys for admission, have no practices that may leave a hair's breadth of room for Christ's enemies to charge you with selfishness. Have a collection at the end of your discourse, on the ground that you cannot live on the air, and pay expenses of lodging, and travelling, and printing, from an empty pocket. Make this simple appeal to your countrymen, and they will not fail to respond to it, generally."

To such a band of young men, I would say—Suppose, sometimes, you do *not* get enough to pay your expenses, do not be discouraged, do not give up your trust in Him for whom you are working—and never let the fact of the small collection slip out, so that the poor people who have given you the collection may get to hear of it. Never hurt the minds of the poor, by finding fault with what they have done in their poverty.

But, to whom am I really appealing, at the present time? Twelve years ago, my appeal was intended for working men ; but the work is now become too difficult for them. *They* have not the preparation of mind, nor the time, for mastering—as they ought to master—the works of Darwin and Spencer and Tyndall and Huxley, and their helpers. I appeal, at once, to the young men of our Univer-

sities and high schools. I would say to them—Do you imagine that to display true heroism you must enter either the army or the navy? Suppose you cannot grow famous, or attain high rank by it, is not the enterprize truly glorious, of going forth to face all difficulties, to encounter scorn and mockery and malice, and yet to persevere in the championship for Christ's truth? If you can acquire no worldly wealth by such a championship, you will be laying up treasures in heaven.

I am addressing you because you have been schooled in thought and language, and you have, I make no doubt, become acquainted with Evolution and all that is so positively asserted in its favour. Do not fear that you will find all thinking men against you. However confident Sceptics may feel that Christianity is "done for," and that all real scholars and thinkers have "given it up"—you will find that they are mistaken. Many true scholars and sterling thinkers in our own land are determined foes of the new doctrines. And, on the Continent, not a few leading scholars and thinkers have declared their dissent from the prevailing views which are so adverse to Christianity.

I have just met the following paragraph in the *Leeds Mercury*, one of our best-conducted local newspapers:—"The English admirers of Mr. Herbert Spencer will be astonished at the wholesale condemnation of his writings by M. Adolphe Franck, in his

Essais de Critique Philosophique, just issued by Hachette & Co. The well-known Parisian professor avows that he experiences a veritable humiliation when he recalls the exceptional celebrity secured for the school of Mr. Spencer. It would be difficult, he believes, in the entire history of philosophy to find so many arbitrary affirmations, chimerical hypotheses, sophistical reasonings, contradictory conclusions, such contempt for history, reason, the moral sense, and the religious sense of humanity, as are to be found in the innumerable, ill-digested, and prolix volumes of Mr. Spencer and his auxiliaries."

M. Franck's estimate of the intelligence of Herbert Spencer is evidently unlike that of Mr. Darwin, who was accustomed to call him "our great philosopher," and that of Professor Tyndall, who described him as "the apostle of the understanding." But all that was in the gay days of the "Mutual Admiration Society," as Wendell Holmes smartly named the new philosophers—when they were new, and mightily addicted to the habit of publicly paying each other fine compliments.

There is another point on which, I think, I ought to say a little. I laid aside Discussion, and the putting of questions at the end of my lectures, a dozen years ago, or more. I was shown that they did no good, and I followed the advice to go on simply delivering my lectures, and allowing no discussion or putting of questions, publicly—but

inviting all who wished to tell me of their doubts to call at my lodgings that I might converse with them. Not a dozen persons have called on me, in so many years, to tell me of their doubts. This is clearly significant of the fact that when the Secularists demand discussion, it is for the excitement of a public encounter and not with the strong desire to be right.

And I found that when I sturdily refused all attempts to draw me into discussion, the Secularist working men began to fall off in their attendance on my discourses. From that time I bent all my endeavours on preventing young Christian men from falling in to the Secularist snare ; and in this, I trust, I may thankfully affirm that I have been blessed with success.

Christian readers, however, will see that my championship might have been successful in another and desirable direction, if I had yielded to the Secularist demand for discussion. And if a band of young men should respond to my appeal, and unite to labour as the defenders of Christian truth, I would advise that some of them who are physically strong and mentally ready, should willingly enter into debate when challenged.

I the more willingly gave up all discussion, because I formerly was in the habit of lecturing for two hours at a time ; and I found that I could no longer sustain the acrimony and worry of debate.

In my later years I dare not exhaust nature either by giving long lectures or entering into discussion. One great gain for young lecturers who are fitted for discussion, will be the larger attendance of Secularists, and therefore, the greater possibility of doing them good.

Regarding this as my last appearance in print, I trust I may be forgiven if I record one little fact. The lowly Christian Church of General Baptists in this city—where their predecessors, more than two hundred years ago, were stoned and imprisoned for preaching and practising immersion baptism—and who have continued to be a poor, and, I had almost said, a despised people—have lately taken courage and set about building a new and more commodious chapel and schools—and have determined to name the new place of worship “The Thomas Cooper Memorial Chapel.” I am utterly undeserving of the honour they put upon me ; but they insist upon it that the name will have the desirable effect of inducing many who are not Baptists to subscribe towards their Building Fund. I most heartily wish it may, and will most cordially thank all who send help to the lowly Christian people who so greatly need it.

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